

4474. 293. 2
S E V E N
S E R M O N S

F I Z

- I. Of the Unpardonable Sin against the HOLY GHOST: or, The Sin unto Death.
- II. The Saint's Duty and Exercise: In Two Parts, Being an Exhortation to, and Directions for Prayer.
- III. The Accepted Time, and Day of Salvation.
- IV. The End of Time, and Beginning of Eternity.
- V. *Joshua's* Resolution to serve the Lord.
- VI. The Way to Heaven made plain.
- VII. The future State of Man: or, A Treatise of the Resurrection.

By ROBERT RUSSELL,
at WADHURST, in SUSSEX.

The Third Edition.

Licensed and Emended according to Order.

London: Printed by W. O. for J. Blay, at the Looking glass in Ludgate-street.

university
emphatically
Thomas. Speed
1/12 1/13/2

Thomas
James



John
John
John
John
John

is:
it i
lar
rec
hav
from
Sin
im
mit
of
and
Sin.
of,

John Russell
John

John Russell
THE

Preface to the R E A D E R.

THE Reason of Publishing this following Treatise, is, Because some People have desired Satisfaction from me, what the Sin against the HOLY GHOST is: but I could not make a full Description of it in short; therefore it came into my Mind to enlarge upon it in a small Book; wherein they may receive full Satisfaction about it. And this I have done, not from the Opinions of others, but from the true and written Word of GOD. This Sin can be committed but by few; and yet sometimes steals into the Hearts of them that commit it, when they discern it not. But the LORD of his Mercy, keep us all, both from that Sin, and also from the Reign and Dominion of every Sin. Which that we may do, is the Prayer of,

Your Friend,

R. RUSSELL.

A TABLE of the several TEXTS
discoursed upon.

*¶ Here is a Sin unto Death, 1 John v. part
of Verse 36.*

Pray without ceasing, 1 Thess. v. 17.

*— Behold now is the Accepted Time: behold
now is the Day of Salvation, 2 Cor. vi. part
of Verse 2.*

*And the Angel which I saw stand upon the
Earth, and upon the Sea, lift up his Hand to-
wards Heaven: And swear by him that li-
veth for ever and ever, &c. That there should
be Time no longer, Rev. x. Verse 5. and
part of Verse 6.*

*But as for me and my House, we will serve the
Lord, Josh. xxiv. part of Verse 15.*

*Good Master, what shall I do to inherit Eternal
Life? Matth. xix. 6.*

*Marvel not at this, the Hour is coming, where-
in all that are in the Graves shall hear his
Voice, and shall come forth; they that have
done Good, unto the Resurrection of Life, and
they that have done Evil, unto the Resurre-
ction of Damnation, John xxviii. 29.*

Of the Unpardonable SIN
AGAINST THE
HOLY GHOST:
OR,
The SIN unto DEATH.

*r John V. part of Verſe xvi. There is a Sin
unto Death.*

THis Sin which St. *John* calls here
the Sin unto Death, is the unpardonable Sin against the Holy Ghost, described by our blessed Saviour, *Matth. 12. 31.* that whosoever commits it, hath no Forgiveness, neither in this World, nor in the World to come; For, *All manner of Sin and Blasphemy shall be forgiven unto Men; but the Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, shall not be forgiven unto Men: And he that speaketh a Word against the Son, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, shall never be forgiven, neither in this World nor in the World to come.* This Sin against the Holy Ghost, that is,

A 3

that

that Sin which St. John calls here, *the Sin unto Death*: Not because that Sin deserves Death alone, for so does all Sin deserve Death both Temporal and Eternal; for *the Wages of Sin (even all) is Death*, Rom. 6. But this Sin against the Holy Ghost, is called, *The Sin unto Death*; because it binds a Man over to Eternal Death, without any possibility of recovery. Now some there are, that go from one degree of Sin to another, they heighten and aggravate their Sins more and more, until they are brought to that Height at last, as to commit that Sin, for which there is no Forgiveness.

There is no meer Man since the Fall, that can live without Sin, for all are Sinners: But yet there are Degrees of Sin; some Sins in their own Nature are small, others are more great and hainous. Many Sins there are that are great, yet pardonable; and one Sin there is unpardonable; and whosoever commits that one Sin, shall have no Forgiveness, but must for ever bear the Weight and Punishment, both of that, and of all his other Sins. There is such a Sin as St. John speaks of here in my Text; that is, *a Sin unto Death*. And now I come to the Explication of the Words; from whence I shall raise this Point of Doctrine:

Doct.]

yet not be capable of committing this unpardonable Sin: But we must be so far enlightened, as to see the Evil that is in Sin, and the Excellency of Christ; he must taste of the Heavenly Gift, and be made Partaker of the Holy Ghost, and taste of the good Word of God, and the Powers of the World to come, and by the Blood of the Covenant, which he counts as an unholy Thing, he is in part sanctified and cleansed from many Sins; he must have sweet Communion with God in his Word and Sacraments; he must have some Taste of the Love and Favour of God, and Comforts of his Spirit, and be refreshed by it, and taste of the Joys of Heaven, and have some Fore-taste of the Happiness of the World to come.

This is that Light and Knowledge that lays a Man open to the committing of that unpardonable Sin: But yet a Man may sin against all this Light and experimental Knowledge, and yet do it through the Weakness of the Flesh, or through some violent Temptation, as *Peter* did when he denied Christ: Therefore,

4. He must oppose the known Truth wilfully; he must wilfully fall away, after he hath received the Knowledge of the Truth: Other Sins are committed through In-

16 Of the Unpardonable Sin

Infirmity, but this Sin is wilful: the Will is the chief Actor in it: And, to compleat and make up this unpardonable Sin, there is,

5. Malice in the Heart; without this, this Sin cannot be committed; it must be a malicious opposing of the known Truth; that is when a Man being once enlightened, and tasted of the heavenly Gift, and the good Word of God, and hath been made a Partaker of the Holy Ghost, and hath had some sweet Relish and Fore-taste of Heaven, he comes at last to take a Dislike, and to hate the holy Ways of God, and maliciously oppose and persecute them, and to die in despite to the Spirit of Grace, crucifying afresh the Son of God, and putting him to an open Shame.

Now a Man having gone thus far, he comes in the last place to be an Apostate: For thus to oppose wilfully and maliciously the known Truth, is always joyned with final and total Apostacy, for he that is so far enlightned, as to see the Evil of Sin, and the Excellency of Christ and Holiness, and been made a Partaker of the Holy Ghost, of his Graces and Comforts, and tasted of God's Love and Favour in Jesus Christ, and has some Fore-state of the Joys of the World to come: Now for
such

such a one wilfully, spitefully, and maliciously to fall away, he so falls, as never to rise more. It is true, the Children of God fall, and that often, and yet rise again; but then they fall through Weakness or Infirmary, and not wilfully and maliciously; but these wicked Wretches fall wilfully and maliciously, and so fall finally. Against such the Door of Mercy is ever shut: Concerning such St. Peter saith, *It had been better for them not to have known the Way of Righteousness, than after they have known, to turn from the holy Commandments deliver'd unto them.* But it happened unto them according to the true Proverb, *The Dog is turned to his Vomit again; and the Sow that was washed to her wallowing in the Mire,* 2 Pet. 2. 21, 22. There is such another dreadful Place of Scripture against these kind of Apostates; that is, *Heb. 10. 26. For if we sin wilfully, after we have received the Knowledge of the Truth, there remaineth no more Sacrifice for Sin, but a fearful Looking for of Judgment and fiery Indignation.* Thus I have given you five Steps, as so many Links in a Chain, all which makes up the unpardonable Sin against the Holy Ghost. It is a wilful and malicious Opposing of the known Truth, joyned with final Apostacy. Thus have I shewed you as plain as

I can, what this Sin unto Death is. Now to proceed :

Secondly, The next thing to be considered, is, That all other Sins or Blasphemies whatsoever may be forgiven, be our Sins never so great and many, tho' we be the vilest Wretches that ever liv'd, yet there is hopes of Pardon upon Repentance. *Mannasses* was the vilest Sinner that ever we read of, yet he repented and was pardoned : Also *Mary Magdalen* was the Chief of Sinners, for out of her came seven Devils ; yet because she loved much, much was forgiven her. A Man may be a Whoremonger, an Adulterer, and work Witchcraft, and deal with Familiar Spirits, and yet at last he may repent and be saved. And yet I have heard talk of some that are so foolish, as to take the Sin of Fornication, to be a Sin unpardonable ; for from God's own Words in the fourth Commandment, *I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the Sins of the Fathers unto the third and fourth Generation* : From whence they say, That Children that are base-born, are not saved, unto the third and fourth Generation. But this is a most erroneous Interpretation of God's Word ; it is ~~man~~ ^{men} that hate him, and continue hating of him, that he will visit their Iniquities

quities upon: For Fornicators and Adulterers themselves may repent and be saved, much more the Children who knew nothing, nor could help nothing: For Christ with his own Mouth tells the Scribes and Pharisees, *Matth. 21. 14.* that the Publicans and Harlots shall enter into the Kingdom of God before them; for there is no Sin but is pardonable, except the Sin against the Holy Ghost. But,

Thirdly, The Sin against the Holy Ghost is alone the Sin unto Death; that is, a Sin unpardonable, never to be forgiven, neither in this World, nor in the World to come: Not because the Merits of Christ is not sufficient to pardon it: for this Sin, as well as all other Sins, are but finite, whereas the Merits of Christ are infinite.

Object. But what is the Reason then that this Sin cannot be forgiven?

Ans. This Question brings me to the fourth Thing considerable: do but mind me a little, and I will, as plain and as clear as I can, tell you what the Reason is.

The Reason arises from the Nature of this Sin; for this Sin, by whomsoever it is committed, hardens the Heart, and sears the Conscience, so that there is no place for Repentance to be wrought, neither for that, nor any other Sin. This Sin

is called the Sin against the Holy Ghost, not because it is a Sin against the Person of the Holy Ghost, for so is all Sin against his Person, but it is called the Sin against the Holy Ghost, because it is against the Office and Work of the Holy Ghost. Now every one of the Three Persons have their particular Work: The Work of the Father is to create; the Work of the Son is to redeem lost Sinners; and the Work of the Holy Ghost is to enlighten, convince, sanctifie and convert them. Now a Man committing this unpardonable Sin against the Holy Ghost, rejects all this Work of the Spirit. Now for a Man to be thoroughly enlightned by the Holy Ghost, that he comes to know the Evil of Sin, and of his lost and undone Condition without Christ, and that none but the Merits of Christ can save him; then for him, wilfully and maliciously, to oppose him, and the Work of his Spirit, and will not be beholding to him for Salvation, now for such a one to be forgiven, is utterly impossible.

Object. But why is it impossible? Nothing is impossible with God.

Ans. Nothing is impossible with God that does not imply a Contradiction; but for God to forgive the Sin committed against the Holy Ghost, implies a Contradiction

tion : For how can he have Pardon given him, that utterly rejects it? As for instance :

A Man, through Ignorance, may deny Christ, and maliciously fall from the Profession of the Truth, into all kind of Wickedness, as did *St. Paul*, and the Jews that crucified Christ; and yet, not falling against Light and Knowledge, there is room for the Holy Ghost to work upon him to enlighten him, and to convince him of his Folly, and so makes a way for Conversion. And besides, a Man, after he hath been enlightned, and yet falls back thro' Infirmary, and the Weakness of the Flesh, as *Peter* did, and doth not fall wilfully and maliciously, then the Holy Ghost may work upon him and renew him again, and work in him a deep Sorrow, for abusing so much Love and Mercy, and so carry on his good Work unto Salvation. But for a Man when he is once enlightned by the Holy Ghost, and has had some Taste of God's Love and Favour, and some Foretaste of the Joys of Heaven; and then, at last utterly opposing this Illuminating Work of the Spirit, and wilfully and maliciously to fall away, and so to reject the Spirit's renewing Work: Alas! then the Holy Ghost has done, he has nothing more

then he can work in him; for this wretched Creature has utterly rejected him; his Enlightning Work, his Convincing Work, his Sanctifying Work, he has utterly rejected Christ's Pardon, Heaven and all. Now this poor Wretch is past all Hopes of Mercy, all Hopes of Pardon; nay, for such a one we are forbidden to pray; as you see in the Verse whereof my Text is a Part. Now Christ prayed for them that maliciously crucified him, *Luke 23. 34. Saying, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.* Alas! they knew not what they were doing; for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory, *1 Cor. 2. 8.* But if they had known, and yet crucified him, Christ would not have spent his Breath to pray for them; for it would have been utterly in vain: For when a Man has committed this unpardonable Sin, neither the Prayers in Heaven nor Earth can do him any good: for as the Text saith, *There is a Sin unto Death.*

I shall conclude all with a few Words of Application; and I will be as short as possible, because this Discourse will be too large for so small a Book. Here is,

First, A Word of Comfort.

Secondly, A Word of Counsel.

First,

First, A Word of Comfort: It may be with Hearing and Reading of this terrible Discourse, your Hearts begin to ake with Fear, that you may have committed this unpardonable Sin: But I think I have sufficiently proved to you, what it is; and I tell you again, that there are but few that can commit it; nay, there are Millions that are tormented in Hell, yet never committed this Sin; nay farther, an ignorant Protestant, may thro' Weakness, and out of a slavish Fear, turn Papist, and renounce his Profession, and yet not commit this unpardonable Sin against the Holy Ghost: For doing it out of Ignorance and Infirmary, there may be Matter left for the Holy Ghost to work upon, whereby he may yet be converted and saved. Consider this also, if you are afraid that you have committed it, and wish that you had not committed it, if it were to do again, then that is a true Sign that you have not committed it.

Secondly, I must conclude also with a Word of Council:

I. Watch very diligently against all Sin, but above all, take special Heed of those Sins that come near to the Sin against the Holy Ghost; and they are these, Hypocrisie, taking only the outward Profes-

sion of Religion, and so dissembling and mocking of God; sinning wilfully against Conviction of Conscience, and against great Light and Knowledge; sinning presumptuously, and with an high Hand: These Sins, tho' none of them are the direct Sin against the Holy Ghost, yet they will come very near to it; therefore take especial heed of them, lest they, in time, should bring you to the committing of that unpardonable Sin. And,

II. Labour to be sincere in Religion, and by a true Faith ingraft your selves into Christ; for they that be with Christ, can never commit this unpardonable Sin: For know this, that amongst all the Sins committed by fall'n Mankind, there is one Sin, *that is a Sin unto Death*; which is the unpardonable Sin against the Holy Ghost; which whosoever commits it, hath no Forgiveness, neither in this World, or in the World to come.

Consider what has been said, and the Lord give you Understanding.

The End of the first SERMON.

T H E

Saint's Duty and Exercise :

Or, An Earnest

Invitation to the Throne of G R A C E.

The First Part.1 Thess. v. 17. *Pray without ceasing.*

TO the Glory of God and the Good of Souls, there is no Subject more necessary for me to write upon than to stir up People to the Duty of Prayer, both in their Families and Secret; I find it is a Duty most sadly neglected, not only amongst the most Prophane, but even amongst the Best: The prophane sort of People indeed they seldom or never pray in their Families, therefore it is to be feared much less do they pray in Secret: But I have been amongst such as seem to be the best of People, that are just and righteous in their Dealings towards others, that love the Company of God's People, that delight to hear the best Preachers, and joyu
 B 3 with

with the best Assemblies, and are very kind and courteous towards others, and yet they neglect Prayers in their Families. Some of them I know do pray in their Families on Evenings before they go to Bed. But as for those that makes Conscience of performing the Duty of Prayer in their Families, both Morning and Evening, they are so few, that there are but here and there one to be found of them: This is a Case very much to be bewail'd and lamented: Nay, in this one Duty I have just cause to condemn myself, for I may write it with Shame enough, that this Duty of Prayer has been too much neglected by me as well as by others; nay to this Day I find so much Averseness and Backwardness to this Duty, so much Sloathfulness, Deadness, Dulness of Spirit, and sometimes one Lust or one Vanity or other steals into my Heart, which makes me think my self to be unfit for this Duty of Prayer, and I find it sometimes very hard to pass over all the Difficulties, and perform the Duty of Prayer aright. This makes me the more to pity others, looking upon them to be in the same Condition with myself. But consider, Friends, this is the Work of the Devil, who does what he can either to keep us from Prayer, or else to disturb us in Prayer. So it was with the Children
of

of God, *Job* 1. The Sons of God there came and presented themselves unto the Lord: But what to do? I answer, It was to Pray and make Supplication unto the Lord. Then it is said, that Satan came among them: But what did he come among them for? I answer, It was, if he could, either to keep them from their Duty, or else to disturb them in their Duty, by filling them with wandring and distracted Thoughts, thereby to cause 'em to lose the Benefit of the Duty. Alas! Friends, faithful Prayer is that which the Devil cannot endure; for there is no Weapon more powerful for the weakning of Satan's Kingdom, and setting up the Kingdom of Christ in the Souls of Sinners than Prayer is.

The Devil is content that we should read and come to Church, and hear Sermons, without much disturbance, because he thinks he may easily keep us from profiting by the Word; but he labours with all his Might to keep us from Prayer and Meditation, because he knows that these Duties weaken his Kingdom. But, my Friends, let not you and I any longer yield to Satan's Temptations, but resist him, and stir up ourselves to take hold on God, and call upon his Name by constant fervent Prayer.

Certainly if the Wickedness of the So-

domites grieved and vexed the Soul of righteous Lot, it would grieve him much more if he were now amongst us in this degenerate Age, and saw how Wickedness abounds in the World: How God is by one Judgment or another frowning upon us for our ungodly Doings; how that the end of all things is near at hand, and yet how many prayerless Persons and Families there are amongst us; how Multitudes of People can rise in the Morning and go about their Concerns in the World, and then to Bed again at Night, and never regard to pray in their Families, but live as if they had not a God to seek, as if they had not an everlasting State to prepare for; how good or religious soever they seem to be, yet their neglect of Prayer shews them to be yet in their Sins; and therefore in a most miserable State and Condition. Friends, let me desire you to consider with me these few things:

First, Consider that your neglect of Prayer, is a Sign that you are none of God's Children, but you are yet in your unregenerate and unconverted State and Condition, and it were better that you had never been born, than that you should die in such a Condition. O consider, that your Breath is in the Hands of God, and he may

may stop it whensoever he pleaseth; you cannot assure yourselves of a Day or an Hour to live: And is it not then a dangerous thing to live in the neglect of Prayer? O Friends! how dare you to go forth in the Morning without Prayer, lest Death should meet you before Night and cast you into Hell? Or how dare you lie down at Night in your Beds, before you have been at the Throne of Grace, and pleaded there with the Lord by Prayer, for Grace, Pardon and Mercy, lest you should awake before Morning in the Flames of Hell? O do but consider now and then upon this, how exceeding dangerous it is to live in the Neglect of Prayer. But if you have the Spirit of Prayer, if you give yourselves up to constant fervent Prayer, this is a Sign of your New Birth; and, whensoever Death comes, you are safe. You know that a Child as soon as it is born cries; so a Sinner, as soon as it is born again, falls a crying unto God; as it was said of *Paul*, as soon as he was born again, *Behold he prayeth*, Acts 6. 11. It is the Spirit of Adoption that makes us cry, *Abba*, Father, Rom. 1.

Secondly, Consider the End why God requires Prayer, and let that encourage you to the Duty; God does not require Prayer

that he may receive from us, for he is infinitely and perfectly happy without us, and therefore needs not our Performances. But God being willing to bestow those good Things we need, and to communicate that Grace and Mercy, without which we are miserable for ever; therefore it pleaseth God, out of his infinite Goodness, to require Prayer, to make us fit for the Mercy which he knows we want; therefore the Lord commands us to *Pray always*, Luke 12. 36. *Pray always, that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things, and to stand before the Son of Man.* So 1 Tim. 7. 8. *Pray every-where, lifting up holy Hands.* So Rom. 12. 22. *Continue instant in Prayer.* So Phil. 4. 6. *In every thing by Prayer and Supplication make your Request known to God.* And also here in the Text, *Pray without ceasing.*

Thirdly, Consider whilst you are Strangers to Prayer, you are Slaves to the Devil, and he is doing what he can to work about your utter Ruine and Destruction: The Devil is said in Scripture to fill the Hearts of the Ungodly, to keep possession of them, and to work in the Children of Disobedience. And truly the Devil finds abundance of Prey, for most watch not at all, pray not at all against him; And these that pray not, are led captive by Satan at his

your of Life unto Life : But where Prayer is wanting, there ordinarily the Word hardens and becomes a Saviour of Death unto Death. In a Word, as common Mercies are made a Curse unto prayerless Persons, so if they continue in the Neglect of Prayer, they must certainly miss of those especial saving Mercies revealed in the Gospel, as, Pardon of Sin, Justification by Christ, Adoption, Sanctification by the Spirit, Deliverance from Hell, Eternal Happiness in the Life to come ; and God hath determined and declared in his Word that those that will have these things, must seek them : But if they seek them not by earnest fervent Prayer, it is a Sign they understand not the Worth of them, nor yet their own great Need of them, and therefore must certainly and justly go without them. God is not so prodigal of his Mercies and Favours as to fling them away upon those Persons, that do not think them worth the praying for. These Considerations I have given you as an Introduction to the Matter ensuing, that you may be the more stirred up to mind what I have more to write : And if you have hitherto neglected Prayer, that you would now in good earnest set about it. O you that are strangers to Prayer, consider that

you

you are all this while in a most woful and miserable Condition ; for you are in your Sins, Slaves to the Devil, meer Strangers to God, and under his Wrath and Curse; and if you should die in this Condition, you are undone for ever. And will you not seek unto the Lord, by earnest fervent Prayer, that you may be deliver'd out of this Condition?

You want a Pardon, you want Christ and Grace, and you are undone if you have not these Soul- blessings, and you will not ply the Throne of Grace for the obtaining of them: Friends, if you did but seriously consider your Straits and your Wants, you would find it necessary to obey the Words of the Apostle here in the Text, to *Pray without ceasing*. Now the Point of Doctrine which I shall raise from these Words, is this, That it is both the Duty and Work of every true Christian, to *Pray without ceasing*. Now, in my further handling of this Point concerning Prayer, I shall endeavour, *First*, To shew what Prayer is. *Secondly*, What it is to Pray continually. *Thirdly*, To shew some Reasons why we ought to Pray without ceasing. And, *Lastly*, to make Application.

First, What Prayer is: In short Prayer is an earnest fervent Offering up our Desires

fires to God by Faith, in the Name of Jesus Christ, for those good things that are agreeable to God's Will, and our own Necessity: Now there must concur these two things to make up the Duty of Prayer; 1st, An earnest and fervent Desire, a longing Desire after those Graces and Blessings we come to God for; for there are some that come frequently to the Throne of Grace, and offer a Form of Words in a praying Way; I say, a Form of Words, either composed ready to their Hand, or else of their own composing: And so they come to God with an Expression of Words without any hearty Desire after those Graces and Mercies they seem to pray for; but their Desires run out after other things, after their Lust, their Covetousness, and after the Things of this World; and yet they will seem to Pray mightily against Sin and Fleshly Lusts, which they have no desire to be rid of; and for the obtaining of those Graces and Spiritual Mercies, which they are not sensible of their want of, nor have any desire to attain. But yet they will often make use of Prayer, either as a Veil to hide and cover their Wickedness, and to shew themselves to the World to be Religious, or else as a Device to quiet their Consciences in a Course of Sin; and
so

so they make Confession of Sin, to serve instead of Forfaking of Sin; and Praying, instead of Repenting. Now such a kind of Prayer is abominable to the Lord; yea, this kind of Praying, is indeed no Praying, but only Babling, Dissembling and Mocking of God; yea, it is Lying unto God: *Ephraim*, saith God, *compasseth me about with Lies*, Hof. 12. 5, 12. Hypocrites do not pray, but instead of praying, they tell Lies unto God; they make as if they had a desire to know God, to love and obey God, to be holy and heavenly, when indeed they have no heart, no desire to any such thing. Of this sort were the Scribes and Pharisees, as Christ complains against them, *Matth. 15. 7, 8. Ye Hypocrites, well might Esaias prophesie of you, saying, This People draweth nigh to me with their Mouth, and honoureth me with their Lips, but their Hearts are far from me.* Yea there is a sad Woe pronounced against such, *Matth. 23. 3, 4. Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites, for you devour Widows Houses, and for Pretence make long Prayers; therefore you shall receive the greater Damnation.* This is the first Concurrence to make up the Duty of Prayer, which is a hearty and fervent Desire after those Graces and good Things we pretend to pray for, without which

our

our Praying is no Praying, but Babling and Mocking of God. 2dly, The other Concurrence to make up the Duty of Prayer is this: An Offering up of our Desires either with the Mind or Voice, for if our Desires are never so great to attain Grace and Mercy; yet if we do not offer these Desires up with Mind or Voice, our having of these Desires alone is not Praying; but where there are hearty fervent Desires after Grace and Mercy; and these Desires are expressed either by Sighing, Groaning, Whispering, Speaking, or by Voice; this is Praying indeed. And this shall be sufficient to shew what Prayer is.

Secondly, The next thing I promis'd to shew, is, What it is to Pray without ceasing. Now to Pray without ceasing, is not to do like unto that Sect, who thought that Prayer was to be their whole Business: No, no, there are other Duties which God hath required; and Prayer must not come in the way of other Duties, to shuffle them out. But in general, to pray without ceasing, implies a taking hold of, and improving of all those Seasons and Opportunities wherein God and our own Necessities calls us unto Prayer; this is to pray without ceasing. It is said of *Mephibosheth*, That he did eat continually at the King's Table,
2 Sam.

2 Sam. 9. 13. Now what shall we understand from this? shall we think, that he did nothing else Day or Night but eat? No such Matter; but he was always present at Meals, when the Season or Meal-time came: Even so to pray without ceasing, is to pray always, whensoever Prayer is seasonable. But more particularly, to pray without ceasing, implies,

First, A being always in a Disposition and Frame to pray, whensoever God requires it. The Heart must be reconciled to this Duty of Prayer, and fall in love with it, and come to the Throne of Grace with delight, and also be continually resisting of that Backwardness and Indisposition to Prayer whenever the Season of Prayer approacheth, and always to watch our Hearts to keep them in a praying Frame.

Secondly, To pray without ceasing, implies a praying in every State and Condition of Life it pleaseth God to call us to; for without Prayer Sicknes will be unsanctified, and Health will be a Judgment; without Prayer Health and Prosperity will be a Snare, and will occasion a Forgetfulness of God, and a daring to rebel against him, and will serve to encourage a Neglect of the Soul, and of another World; and with-

without Prayer, Adversity will be intolerable, and if it be removed, it will be in Anger. Thus no Condition should cause a Neglect of Prayer.

Thirdly, To pray without ceasing, implies a Persevering in Prayer, a continual Wrestling with God in Prayer, and never to give over, until we have our Request granted. God in his Wisdom is pleased sometimes to cause us to stay long for a Mercy before it comes, but to make the Mercy the sweeter to us when it comes, and also for the Tryal of his Peoples Patience, whether they will persevere and continue waiting at the Throne of Grace: and those that are true Believers will be content to wait, and to wait in God's Way until their Prayers are granted; so did the Woman of *Canaan*, when she came to Christ for Mercy, wait, though at her first Suit, Christ gave her no Answer at all, yet she notwithstanding continued her Suit, with more Earnestness, crying after him: But then Christ, though he spake, yet gave her a seeming Denial, and told her, That he was not sent but only to the lost Sheep of the House of *Israel*. And yet she would not give over, but cried again for Help; but yet, instead of helping her, he called her a Dog, and told her, That it was not

meete

mete to take the Childrens Bread and cast it to the Dogs. Then, instead of leaving off her Suit, she came to Christ with great Humility: she acknowledged herself to be a Dog; she acknowledged her own Unworthiness of Mercy; but yet she despaired not, but by Faith pleaded Christ's Mercy and Bounty, telling him, *Tho' I, being a Dog, am not worthy to be made Partaker of the Childrens Bread, yet the Dogs may eat of the Crumbs that fall from their Master's Table.* This shews how thankful she would have been for the least Crumbs of Mercy: Whereupon Jesus Christ immediately commended the Greatness of her Faith, and as it were, gave her the Key of his Treasure, and bid her take whatsoever she wanted, whether Mercy for herself, or Mercy for her Daughter: *O Woman, great is thy Faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt.* Further, that we might be encouraged to persevere in Prayer without fainting, Christ records to us this Parable, to the end that Men ought always to Pray and not to Faint, *Luke 2. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.* I desire you to take your Bibles and read the Place at your leisure. Friends, tho' you Pray, Seek and Wait long for Power against your Corruptions, for Assurance, and for the Sence of God's Love, even to the end of your Days,
yet

yet if you can but overcome at last, and get safe to Heaven, that will make amends for all your Praying, Waiting, Labouring and Suffering. O therefore let us not be weary in Well-doing, for in due time we shall reap if we faint not, *Psal. 6. 9.* Thus I have shewed what Prayer is, and what it is to pray without ceasing.

Thirdly, The next thing is to give some Reasons why it is the Duty and Work of every Christian to pray without ceasing:

First, We should pray continually, because God is always ready to hear; and tho' God knows our Wants, and is ready at all times to bestow upon us whatsoever we want, yet the Lord in his Wisdom would have us wait upon him by fervent Prayer for those spiritual good Things we want; not that Prayer moves God, but because continual fervent Prayer makes us fit to receive the Mercy we come unto him for; for if God should bestow his especial saving Mercy upon a Sinner, before he is fit for it, the Mercy would be but little prized by him, and God would have but little Return of Praise and Thanks from him. Therefore for this Reason God will be sought unto for his especial Mercies before he will bestow them. After God had promised to pardon, renew, and to heal *Israel,*

rael, yet he appoints Prayer as a Mean to bring down these Mercies before he will bestow it upon them, *Ezek. 36. 37.* For all this I will be enquired of by the House of Israel to do this for them. Consider, Friends, Pardon is ready, and already purchased for you by the Blood-of Christ; Grace is ready, Christ is ready, and Mercy is ready to embrace you Sinners. God waits but for your seeking unto him for these Mercies, and you shall have them; therefore if your perish for ever for want of these saving Mercies, the Fault is not in God, but in yourselves, because you will not seek unto God by hearty Prayer for Grace and Mercy. God is said to look down from Heaven to see if there were any that would seek after God, *Psal. 14. 3.* And he is ready to pardon, justifie, sanctifie, and save them whensoever they seek unto him. Friends, a hearty seeking of God never was in vain, nor never will be.

Secondly, We must pray without ceasing continually, because Christ is continually a praying for us; Christ prayed Night and Day for us, when he was upon Earth, even until he was in an Agony, and now he is in Heaven he makes continual intercession for us, *Heb. 7. 25.* Christ in Heaven is always presenting to his Father his Sufferings, and

by

by his Suffering and Bloodshed, all that we pray for has been purchased; the Blood of Jesus Christ cries in God's Ears on the behalf of those that pray that the Curse that Christ hath born, might be removed from them, that the Sins for which Christ was wounded may be forgiven them; that out of his Fulness they may receive Grace for Grace; and that for his sake they may be delivered from the Wrath to come. Now, Friends, shall Christ pray for us so long, and so fervently, until he was in an Agony, and still prays for us in Heaven, and yet shall we lose the Benefit of all for want of praying for our selves? O for Shame! seeing Christ doth his part, let us do ours!

Thirdly, We must pray without ceasing, because the Spirit is always ready to help our Infirmities, *Rom. i.* The Spirit is ready to instruct us what to pray for; as to remove the Load of Indisposition to this Duty, to quicken our Deadness in the Duty, to enlarge our Desires after Grace, and to strengthen us to wrestle for a Blessing: and truly God is not to be prevailed with, but by the Mediation of his Son, and by the Help and Assistance of his Holy Spirit.

Fourthly, We must pray continually, because Satan is always ready to assault us;

he said, *to go about like a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may devour*, 2 Pet. 4. 8: Satan is never idle, he is always following us with Snares of Temptations; our Life is full of Temptations: And shall not we be continually praying against Satan and his Assaults? Wicked Spirits are continually engag'd against us: *We wrestle*, said the Apostle, *with Principalities and Powers, and Spiritual Wickedness in high Places*, Eph. 6. 12. These Enemies are invisible, and therefore it is the more difficult to withstand them; they are too subtle and too strong for us; we had need therefore to pray without ceasing, seeing they cease not endeavouring to bring us both to Sin and Ruine.

Fifthly and Lastly, We should pray without ceasing, because our Corruptions quickly get Strength upon the least Neglect of Prayer. If by our Watching, Praying and Wrestling with God, we have got some Strength and Power against our Corruptions, as, Anger, Pride, Covetousness, fleshly Lusts, Sensuality; and our Affections are moved, and inflamed towards God and heavenly things, and we are got into a State of Grace, yet if we once let down our Watch, and neglect Prayer, our Corruptions will get strength again, and our
Graces

Graces will decay, and our Love to God and holy things will decay : Now all these things considered, we may see, that it is necessary for us to take care that we be not careless, slight and negligent in our Performance of this Duty of Prayer, but to stir up our selves in the Performance of this Duty, and to pray without ceasing.

Thus I have done with the Doctrinal Part: But before I proceed, I shall answer an Objection or two which may lye in my Way.

One Objection which some will make, is this, Whether they ought to pray with a Form? Some there be that hold with a Form of Prayer, and some be against it.

Now in answering this Objection, I shall endeavour to reconcile both Parties: You must note that there are two kinds of Prayer commanded by God : First, Publick, or Family-prayer. Secondly, Secret-prayer.

For the first of these, if it be about publick or Family-prayer, and you are the Speaker, it is most convenient for you to pray in a set Form of Words, suited to the general Necessities of those that joyn with you, and which are suited to the Sins and Wants of Mankind in general throughout the World. Such Forms as these are already compos'd by many eminent Divines.

I say, in Publick or Family Prayer, it is most convenient to pray in such a set composed Form of Words, that those which joyn with you, being acquainted with your Matter, may with more Readiness go along with you in your Expressions. And as for the Lawfulness of those Forms, consider, that Christ hath given us a set Form of Prayer, which is the *Lord's Prayer*; now this Form Christ hath given us, both to be a Rule and Pattern to direct us in Prayer, and also to be used in our Prayers; the Command of Christ in *Matth. 6.* is in these Words, *After this manner pray ye*; this is to teach us, that the *Lord's Prayer* is given us not only to be used as a Form, but also to be a Rule for Directing of us to pray according to that Pattern. But in *Luke 11.* the Command of Christ is in these Words, *When you pray, say, Our Father, &c.* This is also to teach us, that the *Lord's Prayer* is used not only in Pattern, or Rule, but also as a Form to be used at the end of our Publick or Family-prayers.

To conclude this: Writers record, that Forms were used when our Saviour Christ was upon the Earth; and Christ joyn'd with them in those Forms. And yet Christ, neither contradicted these Forms, nor blamed them for using them. Therefore if
your

your Objection be concerning Publick or Family-prayer, I have sufficiently answered that.

But, *Secondly*, If your Objection be concerning secret Prayer, I shall soon resolve you in that: If you ask, Whether you ought to pray in Secret by a Form? This is the same thing as if you should ask, Whether a Man ought to make use of his Legs, or make use of Crutches to walk with? For you all know, that if a Man be Lame, and cannot use his Legs, he ought to walk by Crutches until he can have the use of his Legs; and then he afterwards ought to use his Legs, and fling his Crutches aside: Even so those that have hitherto been Strangers to Prayer, and also to themselves, who are weak, and have not yet attained unto the Gift of Prayer, and therefore they know not how to pray, these ought to pray by a Form, and to make use of such Forms as may lead them to the Knowledge of their own particular Sins, and their own Necessities; and then as soon as they can come to know themselves, their own particular Sins and Wants, so as to confess them, their own Corruptions and Inclinations, so as to lament over them, their own Temptations, so as to pray against them; also their own Wants, that

C 3

they

they may beg of God to have them supply'd ; then they ought no longer to use a Form, but to lay it aside, as useless, because they are able to express their own particular Wants without it. And besides, there are no written Forms of Prayer, that can suit with the State and Condition of every particular Christian ; for one Christian is under one Circumstance, and another under another ; therefore every one ought to study his own Sins, Temptations and Wants, and then fall to Prayer, according as he finds his own Condition to be. But, for a Man under whatsoever Circumstance he be, yet for him to use a Form, it is a Sign he prays for he knows not what. To give you an Instance or two : Suppose you were a condemned Malefactor, and were going to the King to beg a Paadon, you would not need a written Form of Words to carry with you, for your own Condition would teach you what to say when you came there. Or suppose a Beggar should come to your Doors in a miserable Condition, ready to starve with Hunger, you would soon hear how hard he will beg, what Complaints he will make, and what Arguments he will use to move your Pity, without a written Form of Words. Even so, if you have but a true
Sight

Sight and Sense of your Sin and Misery, and of your Want of such and such Soul-mercies, you would not need a written Form to teach you what to say to God, when you come to the Throne of Grace.

Thus I hope I have sufficiently satisfied you in answering this Objection, Whether you ought to pray by a set Form, or no?

But now to answer one Objection more, and that is, Whether a wicked Man may pray, or not, seeing the Scripture tells us, That the Prayers of the Wicked is an Abomination to the Lord.

I answer, That a wicked Man, however, ought to pray, because whilst he is praying, he is using God's Ordinances: And who knows, but that it may please God to bless it to him for the Good of his Soul, and bring him to pray from his Heart? And besides there is no wicked Man, but he has now and then some good Desires wrought in him, by the common working of God's Spirit, and these Desires he ought to express to God by Prayer; and so far his Prayers will be accepted; and so he may be fitted for the Work of Grace to be wrought in him, and God has promised, that they which draw near to him he will draw near to them. But if he wholly cast off Prayer, he goes further from God, and so

runs the High-road to Hell and Destruction.

Thus, having done with the Doctrinal part, and answer'd these Objections, I come now to the Application: The first Use shall be a Use of Lamentation: If it be such a necessary Duty of every Christian to pray without ceasing; then what shall we think of those that never pray, neither with their Families, nor yet in Secret? They mind nothing but the things in this World, and the Lust of the Flesh, but never seek after God: Sure these must needs be in a sad miserable Condition. This is a Lamentation, and must be for a Lamentation.

Secondly, The next Use shall be of Caution; let us be cautioned against these two things:

First, Let us take heed of a Form of dull careless and heartless Performances of this Duty of Prayer. Now that this may be avoided, take heed of rushing unpreparedly into God's Presence. But if you ask, How shall I do to prepare myself aright for this Duty of Prayer? I answer, If you would pray so as your Prayers may be accepted and granted, you must follow these Directions:

1. Before you go to Prayer, study the Knowledge of your selves; examine how the Case stands between God and your Souls,

Souls ; and which way your Desires run : and if you find that your Desires run Heaven-wards, then examine the Matter of your Desires, what it is you would have God to do for you : Study your Sins and Wants, what Corruptions you desire to be rid of, and what Graces you would have God bestow upon you. If you do not acquaint your selves with your Case beforehand, you cannot expect to know it aright on a sudden, as you go to pray ; if you do not actually look into your Hearts and Lives before you go to Prayer, your Souls will be unhumbled, and want that lively Sence of your Necessities which must put Life into your Prayers. Before you pray, consider what Sin is, what God's Wrath and Hell is, and what Lust and Corruptions are yet in you, and what Grace and Mercy you stand in need of. And this will make you pray, and pray to purpose with all your Heart. But when Men are wilful Strangers unto themselves, and never look back nor inwards to see what was amiss and wanting, nor look not forward to see the Danger that is before them, no wonder if their Hearts are dead and dull ; and they are as unfit to pray, as a sleeping Man is to work.

2. As you go to Prayer, take heed of vain and sinful Thoughts, that they do not

come in and spoil the Duty : To this end, Watch your Heart, your Thoughts, and your Affections very carefully ; otherwise some beloved Vanity will alienate them from the Work in hand, and it will turn away your Thoughts, and possess your Affections, so that you will want them when you should use 'em in Prayer : If the Mind be set on other things, Prayer will be a heartless, lifeless thing : Alas, how dead and pitiful is the Prayer of him that hath his Heart ensnared with the Love of Money, Pleasures or any lustful Desires ? The Thoughts will easily follow the Affections.

3. When you come to God by Prayer, come in such Humility as becometh a condemned Sinner, and yet in the Faith and Boldness that becometh a Son and Member of Jesus Christ ; do not conceive a Conceit of any Worthiness in yourselves ; yet take heed of any despairing Thoughts in Prayer : but be as confident in every lawful Request you ask, as if you saw your glorify'd Redeemer interceding for you with his Father. Faith and Hope is the Life of Prayer ; and Christ is the Life of Hope : If you pray, and think you shall never be the better for praying, your Prayer will have but little Life ; therefore let a crucified and glorified Christ be always before your Eyes
in

can tell you, and that by woful Experience too, that to pray aright is the hardest Work in Religion; and that by reason of those many Oppositions, Pull-backs, and Hindrances to this Duty. Secret Prayer is the greatest Enemy the Devil has; he cannot endure that People should go to pray in Secret, because no Duty can be more powerful in the pulling down of Satan's Kingdom in the Soul, and setting up the Kingdom of Christ, than Secret Prayer is: The Devil is well content that People should set about any outward Duty of Religion, as, reading the Scripture, hearing of Sermons, and praying in their Families, so as all be done in a cold, formal and lifeless Way, without any great Opposition; but for People to go and pour out their Souls to God in secret, confess their own particular Sins and daily Infirmities, bemoaning their Case to God, bewailing their inbred Corruptions, lamenting over a hard Heart, a blind Mind, a dead and dull Spirit, a hearty begging for Pardon, for Deliverance from Sin, for Power against Corruption, for Strength against the evil Lusting of the Flesh, begging for Grace and a new Nature, and a new Life: Now this Work, together with frequent Meditation and Self-examination, these Duties

Duties, the Devil opposeth with all his Might. No Weapons can be more strong for the rooting out of Corruptions, for fighting against Satan and overcoming of him, than these spiritual Weapons. We have naturally a sloathful sluggish Spirit, a dull and backward Heart; the Flesh craves its Ease, the World with its Profits and Pleasures, and the Flesh with its evil Lustings; yea, and the Devil he comes in and makes use of all these for the opposing of us, for the keeping of us off, and for the hindring of us in these secret Duties; the Devil is so loath to let go his hold of the Sinner, therefore he labours with all his Might, if it be possible to keep him in the Chain of his Sin. Therefore there must be great fighting against those Soul-enemies, striving against those Oppositions, and so a wrestling with God by secret Prayer, and a taking the Kingdom of Heaven by Violence, if ever we mean to come there.

Consider, That secret Prayer, if fervent, is a striving against Sin and Corruption; for whenever we are striving with God we are striving against Sin: For Duty and Sin strive for the Victory: whilst Duty holds up, Sin goes down; but when Duty flags, Sin gets up. Secret Prayer, if hearty, will make us weary of Sinning, or else Sin will.

will make us weary of such kind of praying : And if secret Prayer once be a Wearisomness to us, it is a sad Sign that Sin gets the upper-hand ; there cannot be a more effectual Way for a Sinner to kill his Sin, than by secret Prayer ; a Sinner never fights against Sin with a greater Zeal, nor with greater Success, than upon his Knees ; when once a Sinner comes to kneel in earnest before God, his Lusts must quickly kneel to him : Our confessing of Sin, and laying of it open before the Lord, our complaining to the Lord of it, our crying to the Lord against it, pressing him upon his Promise, upon his Covenant to help it ; these are the mightiest Batteries that we can make for the beating down the Strongholds of Sin. But where secret Prayer is neglected, there the Sinner lies open to all Temptations, Sin, Lust, and Uncleaness. O therefore be perswaded to be often and frequent in this Duty of secret Prayer. Friends, what do you say ? Will you mind and do this one thing ; that is, to give your selves unto secret Prayer ? There is no Exhortation that can be given, will ever prosper with you, if this Exhortation do not : It is in vain to perswade you to live a holy Life, if you do not live a praying Life. O be perswaded to be instant and
con-

constant in secret Prayer; set your Times for secret Prayer, and keep your Times, and make a firm Resolution with yourselves to do it. I have read of a godly Divine, who had, upon a Time, some Conference with some of his Hearers, concerning the State of their Souls; they gave him some Hopes of a Work of Grace begun in their Hearts: But then, upon farther Enquiry, he found there still to be a neglect of secret Prayer. Now this cast such a Damp upon his Spirits, that it brought down his Hope to be as low as nothing.

Friends, Consider that secret Prayer is the very Life of Religion, if it be sincere and fervent; and if you would but be persuaded to make true Conscience of that, then there would be Hopes indeed of the Work of Grace begun in you. Now for the further stirring you up to the Duty of secret Prayer, consider these four things:

First, Consider that if you make Conscience of secret Prayer daily and frequently this would be an evident Sign of your Uprightness and Sincerity; it is a Sign that you seek God himself, when none but God knows of your seeking of him. He is not a true Christian outwardly, but he is a true Christian that is one inwardly, whose Praise is not of Men, but of God, *Rom. 22. 28, 29.*

But

But he that lives in the Neglect of secret Duties, though he pass in the World to be never so good a Christian, yet he is in God's Account no better than a Hypocrite.

Secondly, Consider secret Prayer is a marvellous Way to thrive in Grace, and to grow rich towards God. By this means Faith will grow exceedingly, our Love to God will abound, our Souls will prosper. A Christian, that is much in secret with God, O what a great Benefit does he reap thereby ! how good does he find God to be unto his Soul ! So that he can by experience say with the Psalmist, *Psal. 16. 5. that he is plenteous in Mercy to all that call upon him.*

Thirdly, Consider that secret Prayer is a Means to fit you for publick Ordinances : those that are most upon their Knees in their Chamber or Closet, will receive most Benefit in publick : God must be sought unto in secret, to fit us for publick Worship ; those that before they come to hear pray earnestly in secret, that the Gospel may come to 'em not in the Word only, but in Power also, for the cutting down the Strong-hold of Sin, and for the building them up in Grace and Holiness, those are likely to find the Gospel working effectually upon them, and that is the Power of God for their Salvation, *Rom. 1. 14.* Those
that

that before they come to the Lord's Supper examine themselves alone, beg that God would search them, and are importunate with God for Strength against every Corruption, as Pride, Covetousness, Envy, Anger, Malice; also against a hard Heart, Sluggishness and Dulness of Spirit, disordered Affections, Self-love, Sensuality and the like; they also that beg for all the Fruits of Christ's Sufferings, and for all the Graces of his Spirit, such as these are not like to be sent empty away.

Fourthly, Consider secret Prayer is a Means to keep publick Duties upon the Heart, after publick Exercise is ended. Your Work is not done when publick Exercise is over; but you are immediately, as soon as you come Home, to go alone, and in secret to pray over the Word which you have heard: Thus, First, has any Sin been laid open to you, wherein you know your selves to be guilty? Then confess it, and bewail it, and beg Pardon for it, and for Strength against it; and resolve to set your selves against it for the time to come. Secondly, Has any Duty been pressed upon you? then mention to God this Duty in secret, to incline your Heart to perform this Duty.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, Consider secret Prayer is the Way to have especial Tokens of God's Love, and those Joys that a Stranger does not intermeddle with. O the sweet Meltings and Thawings of the Heart for Sin, that the Saints meet with in secret Prayer! O the Visits that the great Physician of Souls does make to poor Sinners in this Duty! And the inward Joy, Peace and Comfort, that the Saints do meet with in their secret Addresses unto God by Prayer! And, Friends, should not this be a great Encouragement to you to be frequent in secret Prayer? But if all this be not Encouragement enough,

Consider in the *Sixth* and *Last* place, that if you daily and frequently pray in secret, meditate and examine yourselves, and take pains with your own Hearts in secret, God will reward you openly. This is the Argument that Christ useth to inforce secret Prayer, *Matth. 6. When thou prayest enter into thy Closet, and shut the Door, and pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.* As secret Wickedness shall be openly punished, so shall secret Duties be openly rewarded, before Men and Angels at the last Day.

Now, Friends, if all these Arguments will not prevail with you to the Exercise of daily

daily fervent Prayer, I know not what will prevail with you. But only let me tell you this, even as you find it in *Acts 2. 21. Whosoever shall call on the Name of the Lord* (that is daily, frequently, constantly, fervently and heartily) *shall be saved.* But whosoever shall not thus call on the Name of the Lord, shall never be saved.

Now in the next place, I shall give you some Directions for the attaining of the Gift of Prayer, and also furnish you with Matter of Prayer, who are bare of Matter, as well for the Help of those who are of a weak Capacity; and, because I would omit nothing that might be for the Good of Souls, that may be a Means and a Way to help them to Heaven, I have now, through the Help of God, writ one Treatise more upon this Subject, to direct you how to attain to the Gift of Prayer, and supply you with Matter for Prayer, with some Directions for short Ejaculatory Prayer; and the Lord give you Understanding.

The End of the First Part.

T H E

T H E

Saint's Duty and Exercise :

Or, An Earnest

Invitation to the Throne of G R A C E.

The Second Part.

1 Theff. v. 17. *Pray without ceasing.***I**N my first Part of [*The Saint's Duty Exercise*] I shewed,

1st, What Prayer is.

2dly, What it is to *pray without ceasing.*

3dly, I gave some Reasons why we should pray without ceasing.

4thly and lastly, I made some Application: Where,

1. I gave a Use of Lamentation.

2. A Use of Caution.

3. A Use of Exhortation. But,

Because this Duty of Prayer is of so great Consequence, that the right Performance of it, shews a Man or Woman to be in a converted and renewed State, and in their
Way

Way to Heaven and eternal Glory, but the Neglect of this great Duty, shews plainly, whatever they think of themselves, they are yet in their unconverted and unrenewed State, and so in the broad Way to Hell and Damnation; I shall therefore (by the Help of God) endeavour to do according as I promised in my first Book; that is, to enlarge my Use of Exhortation.

1st, By shewing you how you shall attain unto the Gift of Prayer; and by what Means you may come to be furnished with matter for Prayer, that are barren of Matter.

2dly, I shall give you some Directions concerning short Ejuculatory Prayer.

3dly, If you are dead and dull, I shall, in the last Place, give you some Directions, how you may get your Hearts enlivened and quickned; and how you may come to be fervent and hearty in Prayer; and so I shall conclude this Subject.

I begin with the first of these:

There are a great many, that by means of long living in the Neglect of Prayer, they are such Strangers to this so great and necessary Duty, that when they come to fall upon their Knees before God, they are so dry and barren of Matter, that they know not what to say in Prayer. Now if this be the Case of any that read this little Book (whoever you are) I desire you to take this Advice that I shall here give you; and then, with your Endeavours, and the Blessing of God with it, you will certainly attain to a most excellent Gift in Prayer.

Now in the First place, do as one of Christ's Disciples did, *John* 11. 1. who came to Christ and

and desired him to teach them to pray, even as *John* taught his Disciples: So go you to God in the Name of Christ, and desire him to teach you to pray: Say, *Lord, teach me to pray.* Beg for God's Holy Spirit, that he would help you to pray, and assist you in Prayer, and put Words into your Mouth; for it is the Spirit that must help our Infirmities, saith the Apostle, *Rom. 8. 26.* *For we know not what to pray for as we ought: but the Spirit it self maketh Intercession for us, with Groans that cannot be expressed.* And if you come with an earnest Desire of the Spirit's help, he will help and assist you. But this is not all; for there are other Means that you must use, if you desire to attain unto the Gift of Prayer.

First, You must labour to be well acquainted with your selves; study well your Hearts and Lives; and study truly the Word and Will of God, and all the Branches of the ten Commandments; which you may do by the help of the *Assembly's Catechism*, or any other Book which explains the ten Commandments: Study also the Largeness of them, and then ransack your Heart and Life, to find out what Sins and Corruptions lurking in your Heart; and what Sins are predominant and reigning in you; as, Pride, Covetousness, Lustfulness, Sensuality, Envy, Anger, Malice, Self-love, &c. Now to know what your Inclinations are, and what Sins and Corruptions are reigning and predominant in you; you may know by the going out of your Heart after vain Things more than after God and heavenly Things; as for Instance, If you love the World, or the Flesh, or your carnal Pleasures, more than God, Christ, and heavenly Things: these Vanities you will

D

will take delight to roul your Thoughts most upon, and discourse more upon them, than upon *God, Christ, and heavenly Things*. Examine also your Life; what Sins you have committed, and what Duties you have omitted: then examine your Weaknesses and Disorders, when you are at any Service of *God*, either at Church or about any holy Duty, either in publick or else in private; labour then to know how dead and dull you are apt to be, and how roaming and wandering your Thoughts are apt to be. Now, if you will take this Course, to labour to know yourselves, your Inclinations and Infirmities, you will then find such a Multitude of inward Corruption to lament and bewail, such a Multitude of actual Sins to confess, and such a Multitude of Wants to be supplied, and so many Weaknesses to be strengthened, so many Disorders to be rectified and so many Sins to be forgiven, that you may find Work enough for Confessions and Complaints and Petitions for many Days together. Study also the Meaning of the *Lord's Prayer*, and there you will find, how short you come of sanctifying *God's Name*, and doing of his Will; and how far the Kingdom of Grace is from coming into your Souls, when as you experience the Kingdom of Sin and Satan to reign there so much.

Secondly, For the furnishing you with Matter for Prayer. In the next Place, study *God and Christ*; and labour to know him in his Natural Attributes and Works; and especially labour to be acquainted with his Dealings towards you and then you will see what a holy and a righteous Law you break, what a *God* you have offended even your Maker, Preserver, and Benefactor.

The

Then study the Holiness and Purity of *God*, and then you will see what an Image you have defac'd; and how you have villified all the Graces of *God's* Spirit, which are contrary to Sin. Study also the Goodness of *God*, and then you will see what Mercies you have abused, what Grace and Love you have rejected: Study the Greatness of *God*, and then you will see what a Majesty you have affronted; who, if he had been pleased, was able to snatch you away in a Moment, and fling you into everlasting Torments, as you have justly deserved. Once more, Study well the Truth and Faithfulness of *God*, and then you will see what Promises you have slighted, and what Threatnings you have contemned, and these things will cause you to aggravate your Sins in confessing of them; and they will melt you with a Multitude of Words in your aggravating your Sins; and besides, they will furnish you to lament over them with a melting and a bleeding Heart; and besides they will make you the more earnest in begging Pardon for them, and to study *God's* great Goodness to you, and to think on the several kinds of his Mercy which he has bestowed upon you, both for your Souls and Bodies: As for Instance, By what wonderful Mercy your Lives are preserved, and you saved from all Dangers, when as so many Distempers, and such a Multitude of Casualties might befall you, to deprive you of Life, yet *God* preserves you against all Casualties and Dangers. And to this end he renews his Mercy to you every Morning, and every Night, and every Hour; he also by his good Hand of Providence, feeds you with the Fruits of the Earth, and gives it Virtue to

nourish you, and gives you an Appetite to digest 'em ; also he continues your Ease, whilst many others are in Pain and Misery ; also he continues the Sight of your Eyes, and the Use of all your Senses and Members, and gives you sweet and comfortable Rest, and comfortable Habitations : And besides, the greatest Mercy of all is, you being in a lost and undone Estate and Condition, he delivered up his dearly beloved Son, as a Sacrifice upon the Cross, that by his Sufferings and Death he might deliver us from Hell and eternal Wrath, and purchase Heaven and Salvation for you ; and upon this Account, he hath given you the Light of his holy Word and Gospel ; he hath given you his Sabbath, and his Ministers, and his holy Spirit to Teach and Instruct you in your Way to Heaven and Happiness. Now if you will but study all these sorts of Mercies, what abundance of Matter you will find for Praise and Thanksgiving ! Study also what Temptations you daily meet withal in the World ; what Snares, Baits and Allurements you often meet with, prompting of you up to Pride, Lustfulness, Wantonness, Covetousness, Intemperance, Malice, or Revenge ; and how apt you are to be overcome by these Temptations ; and then you will find Matter enough to pray for Power and Strength against those Temptations, that you be not overcome : Study also, what Victory you have got over such and such a Lust ; and then you will find Matter of Praise and Thanksgiving to God, for giving you that Victory, as the Apostle did, 1 Cor. 11. 17. also you will find Matter to bewail and lament over those Sins and Corruptions, that you cannot yet find you have got any Victory against

left him more ; and then Grace is departed, and
 he is immediately deliver'd up to a hard Heart
 and a reprobate Mind, that shall never repent.
 And when once he is brought to that pass, then
 all the Sermons and all the Prayers in the World
 will never do him any good. O! therefore have
 a care of quenching and grieving the Holy Spirit
 of God, when it secretly stirs and works in your
 Hearts ; but be careful to obey its Motions, lest
 the Spirit being grieved, withdraw it self finally
 and never return more ; and then your *accepted*
Time and Day of Salvation will be at an end.
 Now consider all this, if you are yet in your
 Youth and Strength, and enjoy the Ordinances of
 God, and the Means of Grace, and the secret Ope-
 ration of God's Spirit ; and then behold, and again,
Behold, that now is the accepted Time, and now is
the Day of Salvation. Now with us there is such
 a Time as an *accepted Time and Day of Salvation* ;
 and that for these two Reasons, I will but just
 name them :

First, That thereby the Saints might have oc-
 casion for ever to magnifie the free Grace of God,
 that he hath not left them to perish in their mise-
 rable Estate, but hath offered them Terms of Mer-
 cy, and hath put an Opportunity of Salvation into
 their Hands, and hath given them Grace to im-
 prove it.

Secondly, That thereby the Wicked may be left
 without Excuse, for there is never a damned Soul
 in Hell that can plead this, That they never had
 a Day of Grace : O it would be a great lessening
 of their Torments, if they could plead so. Alas!
 there was never a Man or Woman, since the
 Creation of the World, but hath had a Season of
 Grace ;

Grace; there was never none yet ever lived, but their Lives short or long, but before they die, they have Mercy offered them, and an acceptable Time to seek it in: Therefore the Wicked shall be left without Excuse; nay, 'twill add much to their Torments, to consider, that they once had a Season of Grace and Salvation, and yet wilfully lost it. O let every one therefore, both small and great, behold, and consider, That now is the Accepted Time, and now is the Day of Salvation.

THE APPLICATION.

THE first Use that I shall make of this, shall be a Use of Terror, to all such as squander and trifle away the precious Season of Grace and Salvation: Friends, you have heard, that God's Spirit will not always strive with Men; God is not bound to wait all a Man's Life long; if God continue waiting from one time to another, from one Year to another, from one Sabbath to another, and yet you turn a deaf Ear to his Calls, and slight all his Warnings, and will go on resolutely, and presumptuously in your Sins; consider, God will at last be weary of waiting, his Waiting will at last be tired out; and then, just as you have served God in your Day of Grace, so God will serve you when his Day of Wrath and Vengeance comes. O read, and tremble, in that dreadful Place of Scripture, *Prov. 1. 2. to the end*: Mark there how lovingly God expostulates with wicked Men, saying, *How long, ye simple Ones, will you love Simplicity? and ye, Scorners, delight in scorning? and ye Fools, hate Knowledge?* And then see his loving Call and Invitation, *Ver. 23. Turn you at my Re-*

proof: And also his gracious Promise, Behold I will pour out my Spirit upon you; I will make known my Words unto you. But yet all this loving Expostulation, Invitation and Promise, would prevail nothing with them, they would run on in their evil Courses for all that; therefore see what God saith to them now, Ver. 24. *Because I have called, and ye refused, I have stretched out my Hand, and no Man regarded; but ye have set at nought my Counsels, and would none of my Reproofs: I also will laugh at your Calamity, and will mock when your Fear cometh; when Fear cometh as a Whirl-wind, when Destruction and Anguish cometh upon them, then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; then shall they seek me early, but they shall not find me, in that they hated Knowledge, and did not chuse the Fear of the Lord.* A most dreadful Text this is, if it be rightly consider'd; in the Day of their Visitation God called upon them to turn from their evil Ways, and then they turn'd a deaf Ear, and would not regard; but afterwards, when their Day of Israel was past, and the Day of their Extremity was come, then they called upon God for Mercy, and God would not regard them. It is a common Proverb amongst us,

He that will not whilst he may,

When he would he shall have nay.

This was the very Case of Esau, he was a Hunting and following his fleshly Delights, when God was calling him to Repentance; and then afterwards, when he would have repented, he was rejected; for he found no Place for Repentance, tho' he sought it carefully with Tears, Heb. 12. 27. Now God may call long upon wicked Men to turn, and be saved, both by his Word and by his Spi-

Spirit, but they will not regard ; but when their Day of Salvation is ended, and they come to lie upon their Death-beds, O ! how they will then cry out, *Lord, pardon me ; Lord, save me ; Mercy, Lord ; Mercy, Lord ; some Mercy for Christ's sake* : But God may justly answer them ; *No, Sinner ; no Mercy to be had ; I once offered thee Mercy, but thou abusest it : and seeing thou wouldest not accept of Mercy whilst it is offered thee, therefore now the Door of Mercy is shut against thee for ever.*

Secondly, My second Use shall be for Matter of Encouragement, to such who are willing to come in, and accept of the Terms of Mercy, but yet keep off through many Doubts and Fears.

O, says one, I am afraid my Day of Salvation is past already ; and if so, all my Endeavours will be in vain ; do what I can, I shall never be accepted.

Ans. To answer this, I will give you this one Mark, whereby you may know whether your Day of Salvation be past or no: You say, You are afraid that your Day of Salvation is past: If so, that is a good Sign that it is not past ; for those with whom their Day of Grace is past, they grow senseless of any such Matter. Again, Don't you find sometimes godly Motions stirring in you by the Spirit ? Don't you find in you sometimes a Sorrow for Sin, after it is committed ; and a Desire to leave Sin ? Doth not your Heart sometimes melt, when you hear the Word preached ? Have you not some Desire to become a new Creature ? If so, then your Day of Salvation is not yet past ; for those with whom the Day of Grace is past, they are given over to a senseless, hard and immoderate Heart, that is neither moved with Mercies nor terrified with Judgments ; and, being gi-

given over to themselves, they run into all kind of Wickedness with greediness; and, as it seems, this is not thy Case, as yet; so now, up, and close with the Terms of Mercy, whilst thy Day of Salvation is lengthned out.

O, but saith another, *it may be, I am none of God's Elect; and, if so, then all my Endeavours will be to no Purpose.*

Ans. Whether a Man be Elected or not, that is not in his Power to know, and therefore he ought not to meddle with it; but you must understand, that God decrees aright, for those whom he hath elected, he hath absolutely Decreed, that they shall be Justified, Sanctified, and Saved: but those whom God hath Reprobated, he hath not absolutely Decreed, that they shall be damned, but hath left them to their own Choice, as *Adam* and *Eve* was; and therefore their Damnation is wilful of themselves; but whether you are Elected or not, if I may so speak, if you repent, and be converted, you shall be saved; if not, you shall be damned: As many as do perish, do not perish because they were not elected, but because they would not use the means in order to their Salvation.

O but, you will say, *it may be, God will not give me Grace to Repent, and without his Grace I can do nothing.*

Ans. Know, for your Encouragement, that both you and every one else enjoys a *Day of Salvation*: and this *Day of Salvation* is a Time of Assistance, as well as a Time of Acceptance: Mark the Promise of Christ, *Mat. 7. 7. Ask and ye shall have; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth;*

ceiveth ; and he that seeketh findeth ; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

Mark, Christ speaks there nothing concerning Election, but every one, whoever he be that asketh, seeketh, and knocketh for Grace, Pardon and Mercy, and that in Season, whilst it may be had, shall certainly be heard and accepted : But then you must be sure to seek in Season, for seeking out of Season, never yet found Success. Now if *Esau* had but sought Repentance in earnest when God called him to repent, then God would have strengthened and assisted him, and also accepted him ; but he sought for Repentance when the Season of Repentance was gone, and that ruined him for ever. Now mark this, whatever the Decree of Heaven be concerning you, yet if you are but willing to leave your Sins, and do heartily desire Grace and Mercy, and earnestly seek it by Prayer and Supplication, and that in the Season of Grace, whilst it is offered you ; then, tho' you can do nothing of your selves, yet you shall have Strength and Assistance enough ; for God will help you, Christ will help you, and the Spirit will help you, you shall have help from Heaven ; and, through the Spirit of Christ's strengthening, you shall be enabled to go through with this great Work, and then you shall not only be assisted, but also accepted and rewarded : But then you must be sure to seek in Season, in your Day of Salvation ; for if you seek out of Season, all your seeking and striving will be in vain.

Lastly, To conclude all with a Word or two of Exhortation : Be exhorted, as you desire the Salvation of your Souls, to consider and improve this precious Season of Grace and Salvation,

working out your Salvation, before it be too late :
O it is most dreadful to consider, that God hath
allotted us but one small Portion of Time, to do
all that ever must be done for Eternity, and yet it
should be squandered away in Vanity and Foole-
ry : But, Friends, whatever you see others do,
do you in earnest lay hold on this your Day of
Salvation, before it is gone : *Seek ye the Lord now,*
whilst he may be found, and call upon him whilst he is
near. And, whilst others spend their precious
Time in Feasting, Rioting, and in the Pleasures
of the Flesh, do you spend your Time in Fasting,
Praying, Repenting, and Suing out the Pardon
of your Sins, and making your Peace with God.
And, if you thus do, then at last, when Time
shall cease, and be no longer, you shall hear that
Blessed Welcome proceed from the Mouth of
Christ, *Well done, thou good and faithful Servant,*
enter into the Joy of thy Lord. Which the Lord of
his infinite Mercy grant unto us all. *Amen.*

The End of the Third SERMON.

E 2

THE

T H E
End of T I M E,
A N D
Beginning of E T E R N I T Y.

Rev. X. Ver. v. and part of Ver. vi.

*And the Angel which I saw stand upon the Earth,
and upon the Sea, lift up his Hand towards Hea-
ven,*

*And swear by him that liveth for ever and ever, &c.
That there should be Time no longer.*

Beloved Friends and Neighbours, I desire you all to take this small Treatise into your Hands, and diligently read it over and over again; and when you have done, enter upon a serious Consideration upon those Matters which are contained in this Book, and lay them close to your Hearts; and I hope it will be a Means to stir you up in time, to lay hold on this your golden Season of Grace, before it be at an end.

In my last Treatise, concerning the *Accepted Time and Day of Salvation*, I was forced to leave out many Things that are of very great Weight and Concernment, because they could not be all

con

contained in so small a Discourse: And it is great pity, that such weighty Matters should be lost; and therefore, upon farther Consideration of it, I have here entred upon another Subject, which is concerning *The End of Time, and Beginning of Eternity*: Wherein I do propose, through God's Assistance, to lay down those weighty Concerns which I was forc'd to leave out in my other Treatise of the *Accepted Time and Day of Salvation*: And, I hope, through God's Grace, it will be an Occasion of winning many Souls, and bringing them home to God, who now squander and trifle away their Time in meer Vanity; and that I shall do from these Words of the Angel, who swearing with a loud Voice, *By him that liveth for ever and ever, That there should be Time no longer.*

Now from this Place of Scripture I might lay down these Particulars:

I. The Description of the Person, that thus swears, *It was a great and mighty Angel came down from Heaven, Ver. 1.*

II. What it was he held in his Hand: It was a little Book open.

III. His Gesture: He stood.

IV. His Manner of Standing: It was with one Foot upon the Earth, and the other upon the Sea.

V. The Loudness of his Voice: It was as loud as when a Lyon roareth.

VI. As he spake: He lift up his Hand towards Heaven.

VII. He spoke with an Oath: He Swear.

VIII. The Person by whom he Swears; that is, *By him that liveth for ever and ever.*

IX. And lastly, The Matter of his Oath, or, the

the Words which he uttered; that is, *That there should be time no longer.*

But I will pass them all by, and insist only upon the last, which are the Words that this great and mighty Angel uttered, and confirmed by an Oath, and Swears by no less than the great and glorious God, *by him that liveth for ever and ever*: And spake them with an exceeding loud Voice; the Words were these, *That there should be Time no longer.*

The Doctrine that I shall raise from hence, is this: That at the End of this World, at the great and dreadful Day of Judgment, Time and Opportunity shall cease and *be no longer.*

From hence I shall lay down these Three or Four Things considerable:

1. What Time should be no longer.
2. When Time should be no longer.
3. The Reason why Time should be no longer.

And then, Lastly, The Application.

In the first Place, I shall shew you, what Time shall be no longer. And, in doing of this, I shall answer an Objection which lies in my Way; that is, How that can be? Some may say, that at the last Day, Time shall cease, and be no longer: whereas it is said, That then nothing shall remain but Time, and that Time shall wait upon Eternity; when all things in this World shall have an End, yet Time shall remain still, and ever shall remain; it is impossible to put an End to Time, as it is to put an End to God himself; Time runs parallel with the Life of God, it never had Beginning, and never shall have End; Time and Eternity are linked together, so that we cannot speak of the one, but we must speak of the other:

Time

Time was before all Millions of Years that can be thought, and it shall remain throughout all Ages to come, even to all Eternity.

Now to answer this : When the Angel swears, that Time should be no longer, he doth not mean Time considered in it self; for that shall remain as long as Eternity endures, and shall never have an End; And for Time to have an End, is a thing impossible : But to take the Words in their true Sense and Meaning, it is the Opportunity of Time, which at the last Day shall cease and be no longer.

I shall name some of those Opportunities of Time, which at the End of the World shall end, and be no longer.

I. The Time of Nature shall be no longer, it was the Promise of God to Man, after the Flood, Gen. 8. 22, *That as long as the Earth remaineth, Seed Time and Harvest, Cold and Heat, Summer and Winter, Day and Night shall not cease* : But at the end of the World, when the Earth, and all Things Temporal shall be dissolved, then all these shall cease and be no longer : *To every Thing, saith Solomon, there is a Season, and a Time to every Purpose under the Sun, Eccles. 3. 1, 2, 3, &c. A Time to be born, and a Time to die, a Time to plant, and a Time to pluck up that which is planted, &c.*

But at the end of the World, all these Seasons and Opportunities shall end and be no longer : then there shall be no more Opportunities of Planting nor Gathering, no more Sowing nor Reaping, no more Opportunities of Buying and Selling, all these Opportunities of Nature shall then cease and be no longer.

II. The Time of our abode here upon Earth

shall be no longer ; at the End of the VWorld, Heaven and Hell shall contain the whole VWorld of Men and VWomen ; either in Heaven or Hell we must abide for ever, but here upon Earth we shall be no more.

David prays, that God would spare him, that he may recover his strength before he goes hence, and be no more, Psalm 39. 13. That is, be no more in a Mortal Estate in this World. And Job 7, 9, 10. As the Clouds consumeth and vanisbeth away, so he that goeth down to the Grave, shall come up no more ; he shall return no more to his House : That is, his Habitation in this VWorld, and his Place here upon Earth, shall know him no more. So also Job 14. 14. If a Man dye, shall he live again ? That is, he shall Live again in another VWorld, either in everlasting Joys, or in everlasting Torments, but he shall Live again no more in this VWorld.

III. The Time of the Tribulations, Sorrows, and Afflictions of God's Children shall be no longer : Now they are persecuted by wicked Men : now they are slighted, mocked at, scorned, and abused ; now they have many a Temptation to strive against ; now the Devil torments them with many Doubts and Fears, that their Sin shall never be pardoned, that God will never more be favourable unto them : Alas ! they are now fain to endure many Sorrows and Calamities, both outwardly in their Bodies, and inwardly in their Souls.

But at the end of Time, there shall also be an end of all their Sorrows : *Then God shall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes, and there shall be no more Death, neither Sorrow ; nor Crying, neither shall there be any more Pain ; for the former things are past away, Rev. 21. 4. Then they shall never*

more

as many Millions of Years as there are Piles of Grass, and Trains of Corn that is growing, and has grown since the Creation of the World; and then add to them as many Millions of Years as there has been living Creatures of all sorts, from the beginning of the World, and shall be to the end; and likewise add to them the Number of the Dusts of the Earth, and the Sands upon the Seashore: Now, to one's thinking, all these Millions of Millions of Years will never be run out; but, yet in time they will be spent and run out; yet, for all that we are not come to an End, no, nor to the Beginning of Eternity: Eternity is an infinite Durative, that shall never, never have an end.

II. My Second Use shall be a Use of Reproof: Is it so, that at the End of Time, this golden Opportunity of Grace will be at an end; and Time shall cease and be no longer; and after this small scantling of Time, here follows an Eternity, either of Joy or Torments? Then what shall we think of those that squander away these golden Opportunities, in doing that which is worse than nothing! All the time that God is offering them Christ, Grace and Mercy, and calling upon them to repent, and accept of Mercy offered; all that Time they waste in following their Lust, grieving his Spirit, despising his Mercy, and abusing his Goodness.

A great many among the poorer Sort, spend a great part of their precious Time in drudging in the World in carking Cares, and in labouring to get a little of this World's Goods; and it may be, as soon as they have got a little together, they die and leave it behind them: They can rise early, and work, and eat, and drink, and sleep; and this is all that they can mind; they don't consider, that

that they have an immortal Soul to look after ; that they have an Eternity to provide for ; they can spare no time for these things that are of greatest Concernment. Again, Others there are, that have more Time than the poorer Sort ; yet, Oh ! How dreadful it is to consider, how their Time is squandered and wasted away ! Some spend much of their precious Time in unnecessary Visits, in following of Sports and Pastimes, others waste much of their precious Time at Cards and Dice, others in Feasting and Drinking, in Rioting and Gaming ; some Ladies there are that waste much of their precious Time, and Day of Salvation, in Dressing and Decking themselves up in gawdy Attire, in Pride and Wantonness. And thus, all the Time that God is calling, wooing, and beseeching People both by his Word and Spirit, to repent and turn, and accept of Christ and Mercy ; he offers them better, sweeter, and more durable Pleasures, than these Earthly Delights, if they will but hearken to his Calls, and return : All this while they are a Drinking, Gaming, and following the Pleasures of the Flesh ; and all the Perswasions, and all the Warnings in the World, will not take them off from their sinful Course of Life. Again, Others there are, when they are alone, yet then there is much of their precious Time wasted by them in vain and sinful Imaginations ; so that God, and the Things of another World, is not in all their Thoughts. Ah ! when they are in Company, Oh ! what a deal of Time is spent in vain and unprofitable Discourse ; but not a Word to edifie one another ; nay, that which is saddest of all to consider, is, that the Lord's Day, which is the most precious Season in all the Week, which is

a Day

a Day to be kept holy to the Lord, in which we are not to think our own Thoughts, nor speak our own Words; but we should spend the whole Day in the Worship of God, in Reading and Praying, and godly Conference, in doing Good, and preparing our selves for Eternity.

On that day especially, above all other Seasons, God calls and earnestly intreats Sinners, (both by his Word and Spirit,) to come in, and close with the Offers of Mercy, and proffers to help them, if they will but turn: And yet, tho' that Day above all others, is the most golden Opportunity of Grace, yet a great many do squander and waste it away after a sad rate: They perhaps go to Church, and lend their Ears a while to the Word, and then as soon as they come out of the Church, they are a Discourfing about their worldly Affairs; nay, in many great Families, they waste their precious Time in a most sad manner; it would grieve any godly and devout Christian, to behold how the Lord's-Days (as well as other Seasons) are wasted by many of them. They indeed join together in going to Church, to hear the Word Preach'd, and so far they do well enough; but then afterwards, when they come Home, there is scarce any thing ever heard from them, concerning the Sermon they heard, or concerning any Matters of their Souls, but the Evening of the Lord's-Day, as well as other Times, is filled up, a great part of it, with their vain and unfavoury Discourse, in Laughing and Jestings, in telling of Stories, and in telling of what News they have heard that Day; with these, and the like Discourses, they fill up their precious Time, when their Discourse should be for what end they were sent in

in the World; what a miserable Condition they are in by Nature, and what is like to become of them for ever, if they should die in that Condition, of the Love of God towards Mankind, in working out their Redemption, in so wonderful a Manner; of their near Approach of Death, of the Shortness of their Time, of the great Account they are to make at the Day of Judgment, of the Felicity of Heaven, and of the Torments of Hell. Oh! Friends, what a happy thing it would be, if you would but on the Lord's-Day, and now and then, at other times, when you are together, enter into such serious Discourse as this, and strive, by your winning Talk, to help one another in the Way to Heaven; then you would spend your Time well indeed. But in reproving of others, I had need also reprove my self; for I am certain, that I have enjoyed as many precious Opportunities of Grace, as most of you have; but I have wasted the greatest part of them in Vanity and Foolery; the Lord give both you and I, and all of us Grace to improve our Time better.

Oh! What a dreadful Account shall we make, at the great Tribunal, if we waste our Time thus, when we shall be called to a strict Account, how we have spent every Hour of our Time; what Answer do we think to make, when there shall be so many *Items* brought in; As,

Item, For so much Time spent in vain and unprofitable Discourse.

Item, For so much Time spent in Feasting and Drinking.

Item, For so much Time wasted at Cards and Dice.

Item, For so much Time spent in Pride and Wantonness.

Item,

Item, For so much Time spent in Idleness.

(But, *Item*, For so much Time spent in Self-examination, in Repenting, Fasting, Praying, and Godly Conference;) Oh! How shall we be able to Answer this before the great Judge?

Now for Pagans and Heathens, who know not God, nor of a future State, for them to waste their Time in Fleshly Lust, is not so much. But we that live under the Gospel, under the Calls of God, under the Striving of his Spirit, under the Offers of Grace: For us to waste our golden Season of Grace in following our carnal Delights, in Deafning our Ears to his Call, in grieving his Spirit, and abusing his gracious Offers of Mercy: For us to do it; Oh! How sad and dreadful will our Doom be at last; we above all others shall have the hottest Place in Hell. Oh! It is a sad Consideration for wicked Men to think of, that when they come to Hell, then they will cry out, Oh! That I had spent my Time better; Oh! That I had in Time hearkned to the Calls of God, and obeyed the Motions of his Spirit; Oh! the many Days and Nights that I have spent in Rioting and Drinking; Oh! The many Hours, that I consumed in Playing and Gaming: If I had but spent all that Time in examining my Heart and Life, in Fasting, in Praying, and in Repenting, in weeping for my Sins, in Begging for Pardon and Mercy, for the sake of Christ, in striving to help others, with me, in the VVay to Heaven, and in labouring to work out my own Salvation.

If I had but thus spent my Time, where might I now have been; I should never have been here in this dreadful Place; but now I should have been amongst yonder Saints, rejoicing and triumphing

phing with them in Glory : Oh ! That the Time past could but be called back again, and the Years that I have so vainly spent ; Oh ! That I could be admitted once more into the Assembly of God's Saints ; Oh ! That God would try me once more with the Means of Grace, (though I lived by nothing but by Bread and Water ;) Oh ! How I would condemn the World, and the Vanities thereof ; all the Temptations, Baits, and Allurements, that the World, the Flesh and the Devil can afford, should never more be able to draw me into Sin ! Oh ! How strictly, how holy, and how purely would I live. Oh ! It would make one's Heart even to ake, to consider what lamentable Outcries these damned Souls will then make : But, alas ! now God tries them one Sabbath and another Sabbath, and then another ; he tries them one Year, and then another Year ; Year after Year they are called upon, both by God's Messengers, and by their godly Friends, to repent, and be converted : How often have they offered Grace and Mercy in the Word, and by the Spirit, and lovingly intreated to accept it ? How often are they told, and told again, what will become of them, if they consume their precious Time in fleshly Lust and Pleasures ; and yet all the Perswasions, and all the Warnings in the World, will not prevail ; nay, if the Messengers of God, and all their godly Friends and Neighbours, did fall on their Knees to them for the sake of Christ, that died for them, that they would take pity upon their poor Souls, and forsake their wicked Courses, and seek for Mercy and Pardon, before it be too late ; But all the Means in the World will not prevail with them. And yet when Time is at an end, and

the
Eter
wri
cry
wer
and
me
Peo
Hon
toge
Win
you
it b
I
Bel
swe
Tim
tha
Tim
wit
lov
13.
Ob
bel
ma
ref
Ch
the
thy
nit
tur
cy
Re
Ho
the

the Gate of Mercy is shut, and nothing but an Eternity of Torments is before them, then they'll wring their Hands, and gnash their Teeth; and cry out, Oh! that I had been reformed, when I were so often called upon by God's Messengers, and my godly Friends; Oh! that God would try me once more. Sure if the Devil did not bewitch People, certainly they could never do as they do: *How often, saith Christ, would I have gathered ye together, as a Hen gathereth her Chickens under her Wings, but you would not, Matt. 25. 31.* I hope you will consider of these things in time, before it be too late.

III. My Third Use shall be of Expostulation: Beloved Friends, you see here how the Angel *swears by him that liveth for ever and ever, that Time shall be no longer.* What is the Reason then, that you will not be perswaded to take hold of Time, in seeking of Mercy and Reconciliation with God, before it be too late? Oh! how lovingly God expostulates with his People, *Jer. 13. 27. Oh! Jerusalem, wilt thou not be made clean? Oh! when shall it once be?*

Thus he expostulates with every stubborn rebellious Sinner; Oh! Sinner, when wilt thou be made clean? Why wilt thou not repent and be reformed? How long shall I stand offering thee Christ, Pardon and Peace, and thou not accept of the Offer? How long shall I stand waiting for thy Repentance, and thou continuest in thy Impenitency, and weariest my Patience, and wilt not turn? How long shall I stand proffering thee Mercy and Pardon, and thou despise it? What is the Reason that no Means will work upon thee? How often have I called upon thee by my Word,
and

and wooed thee by my Spirit ? How often have I sought to allure thee with Mercies, and terrifie thee with Judgments, and have given thee Warning after Warning, and yet nothing will prevail ? Is the Loss of thy immortal Soul, the Loss of Heaven and everlasting Life, so small a Matter with thee, that thou regardest it no more ? Is it nothing to endure everlasting Burnings ? Is it nothing to lie amongst Devils in the Lake of Fire and Brimstone ? For my part, I desire not thy everlasting Misery, but had rather that thou wouldest in Time accept of Mercy, that thou mayest be saved ; if I had any Delight in thy Damnation, thou hadst been in Hell long before this time ; I had never stood waiting upon thee so long as I have done, suffering thee to grieve my Spirit, to tire my Patience, to turn my Grace into Wantonness, to trample under Foot the Blood of my dear Son, that was shed to wash away thy Sins ; If I had delighted in thy Damnation, I had never called upon thee so often as I have done, to turn and live, I had never given thee so many Warnings as I have done : Oh ! Sinner, do I deserve this unkind Dealing at thy Hands, that thou still abusest my Mercy and Goodness : when wilt thou return to me, with a full Resolution to leave thy Sins, and become a new Creature, and accept of Mercy offer'd ? When shall that Time come ; Oh ! When shall it once be ? It is such a Time as would rejoyce the Angels to behold it.

And, Friends, is it not a great deal better, to be a Joy to Angels, than to be a Laughing-stock to Devils ? Oh ! Friends, if all these loving Exhortations will not prevail with you, I know not what will : What could God have done more for you

you, than he hath done, when you have despised his Mercy offered, and deafned your Ears against his Calls? Yet God doth not presently cut you off, but he spares you, and tries you another Year, and then another; and when you still refuse, and will not repent, then, it may be, God sends Sickness upon you, and the Messenger of Death to warn you; and then, it may be, you resolve to lead a new Life, then you will become a new Creature; I will henceforth lead a new Life, if it would please God to restore me once more to my former Health, I will never more spend my Time as I have done: Then it may be God tries you again with a new Life; but now all these Purposes and Promises are forgot, and you are as bad, if not worse, than you were before: Now if neither Calls nor Invitations, if neither Mercies, nor Judgments, nor Warnings will prevail, I know not what can be said or done more.

IV. My Fourth Use shall be a Use of Motive: If all these Expostulations will not prevail, I will lay down serious Considerations, to move you to a timely Repentance; and I will try what they can do, whether by them you will be stirred up to the Improvement of your Golden Season of Grace before it be at an End, and be no longer.

I. Consider, first, how precious your Time in this World is, it is far more precious than Gold; now all the Gold, all the Riches, and all the Treasures in this World, cannot purchase one Minute of Time when it is gone and past; People don't know how precious their Time is, until they come to the End of it, and when once Time is at an End, O then they know the Worth of it: Now Sinners enquire, what they shall do to pass away
 F their

their Time? Time is so plenty with them, that they know not what to do with it; tho' they have so many sinful Lusts to mortifie, so many Corruptions to subdue, so many Sins to repent of, Christ to get an Interest in, and their Pardon to sue out, and Temptations to strive against, so much work to do for God and their own Souls; and the Souls of others, and yet they know not how to spend their Time. Ay, but when once they come to lie upon their Death-Beds, and see nothing before them but an Eternity of Misery: Oh! then they will prize Time after another rate, then they would give ten thousand Worlds, if they had them, but for one Year, or but for one quarter of a Year of that time which they so vainly spent: Oh! if People did but know the Worth of Time as much as they will do then, then they would away with their Cards and Dice, and other Pastimes, and they would spend every Minute of it to the best advantage they can for their Souls eternal Welfare.

2. Consider, How dangerous it is to squander and waste away this your precious Time in fleshly Lust and Pleasures; it may be you think of repenting hereafter, when you come to lie upon your Death-Bed, but who knows but that you may die suddenly, as many do without the least space to repent; and besides, it is a Madness for any to think to do that great Work in an instant of Time, when Time is at an end, which is enough to fill up their whole Time: But supposing you should have a Breathing-space at the Day of Death, yet who knows how long the Season of Grace may continue? *Behold, saith the Apostle, now is the accepted time! behold, now is the Day of Salvation.* 2 Cor. 6. 2. It is now that God calls, and offers you

you his Spirit to assist, and help you, and promises to accept you, if you will but come at his Call, before he hath given you over to your selves; *God* who offers you Grace to Day, it may be, he will not offer it again to Morrow. I have read a sad Story of an Extravagant young Man, who being often admonished by his godly Friends to repent, and reform his wicked Life, he presumptuously gave them this Answer: That if when he lay a dying he did but say Three Words of Repentance, he should do well enough. These Three Words I suppose, was to be, *Lord have mercy upon me*; but on a certain Time, as he was riding over a narrow Bridge with his Horse, his Horse slipped, and fell in with him, and after struggling a while, he was heard to speak these Three Words, *Devil take All*. These were his Three Words of Repentance. It is therefore exceeding dangerous, to put off our Great Work, until Time is at an End.

3. Consider, That the Season and Opportunity of Grace, is the greatest Mercy that we can enjoy; it is such a Mercy as was never vouchsafed to the fallen Angels: Thus *God's Mercies* are renewed to us every Morning; because he every Morning gives us, as it were a New Life, and a new Opportunity of Grace: And, Friends, if you squander and trifle away such golden Opportunities, as *God* hath put into your Hands, you trample under Feet one of the choicest of *God's Mercies*; and do you think, that *God* will bear this at your Hands?

4. Consider, That your Accepted Time, and Season of Grace, is continually a spending, whether you improve it well or not; Time is con-

continually passing away ; it will not stay for you, whilst you are a following your sinful Pleasures, and a wearying God's Patience, but it is continually hastning away ; when once the Sun is up, it keeps its Course, and never ceases going on, until it is gone down ; when once a Candle is lighted, it keeps continually burning, until it is done ; when once a Glass is turned, it never ceases running until it is out ; so soon as a Man is born, God doth immediately put an Opportunity of Grace into his Hands, and then it passes, and keeps passing away, and never ceases running, until it is at an end ; one Day follows another, one Sabbath follows another, and so time keeps running on, until, at last, it will cease, and be no longer.

5. Consider, How dreadful your State will be at last, if Time should be at an End, before you have made your Peace with God : If whilst you are sinning away your precious Time, God should clap a Curse upon your Souls, and swear in his Wrath, that you shall never enter into his Rest ; and so shut against you the Door of Mercy for ever. Oh ! what a dreadful Condition will you be in then ! Then it had been good for you if you had never been born ! Then you may knock at the Gate of Mercy too late, as the foolish Virgins did ; saying, *Lord, Lord open to us* : But the Lord will send you away, with this dreadful Sentence, *I know ye not, depart from me ye Workers of Iniquity*. That is the most dreadfullest Place that is to be found in the Gospel ; read and tremble at it ; it is in *Luke 19. 42*. *As he drew nigh to Jerusalem, he looked upon it, (but it was with Tears in his Eyes,) he wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known*

Christian that is fully bent and resolved after Grace and Holiness, he longs and desires for the Attainment of his Holy Ends, the whole Frame of his Heart is set that Way; and therefore he presently sets about the Work without delay. Indeed, a Hypocrite has many Purposes and Resolutions to repent, and become a new Creature; but he delays and puts off from one time to another, being loath, for the present, to part with sweet Sin, with his beloved Lust, which shews, that his Resolution is not a firm and settled Resolution, his Purposes are unsound and hypocritical.

There was one, *Luke 9. 61.* who made a kind of a Resolution to follow Christ; but this Resolution was not for the present, he begged Liberty to go once more to his sinful Companions, and take his Leave of them: *Lord, saith he, I will follow thee, but let me first go and bid them farewell, which are at home at my House.* This shews, that his Purpose and Resolution was not sincere, he made a kind of Resolution to follow Christ. But here lies the Case, there was not a thorough Change wrought in him, he had not rooted out his beloved Sin; the Frame and Bent of his Heart was more towards the following of his Lust, than it was to follow Christ: Therefore, in setting his Hand to the Plough, by making a Resolution to follow Christ, and yet looking back with Pleasure and Delight upon his old sinful Course of Life, he was not fit for the Kingdom of Heaven; as our Saviour tells him, *Ver. 62. Lord, saith he, I will follow thee, but let me first go and bid them farewell, which are at home at my House.*

Thus a wicked Man, when he is intreated and perswaded by a Minister of God's Word, or by any

any of his Godly Relations, to repent and forsake his evil Practices, and to lead a new Life; he, perhaps, under these Godly Admonitions, makes fair Promises, and has some Purposes and Resolutions to repent, and become a new Creature; and yet, notwithstanding these Purposes and Resolutions, he has many delays and Put-offs, because his Heart remains still wedded to his Lust. The Drunkard, he promises, that he will return and follow Christ; but he takes leave first to go once more to the Ale-house, and take leave of his drunken Companions, and take one merry Cup more with them, and then he will come and follow Christ: He has Friends at home at his House, and he must first go and take his leave of them, and make one merry Meeting more among them, and enjoy a little more of their Jovial Company, and then he will follow Christ. The Covetous, he must have leave first to pursue after a little more of this World's Goods, and then he will follow Christ. The Voluptuous, he must have leave first to partake a little more of the sweet of Sin, he must enjoy a little more of his beloved Pleasure, he must down with one sweet Morfel more, and then he will follow Christ.

Thus, Sin is so sweet unto a wicked Man, the World and the Flesh is so bewitching, that notwithstanding a Sinner's fair Promises and Purposes to repent, and turn to *God*, that by these he is hindered of putting any thing into practice, but procrastinates and puts off from one time to another, until perhaps Time is at an End, before he has done any thing in order to his Eternal Salvation.

But a Christian that is fully and firmly resol

resolved to dedicate himself to the Lord, and his Service, so that the whole Frame of his Heart is bent that way, he is so far from delaying, and putting off from one time to another, that he is even Restless, and can find no Contentment in any thing he Enjoys, until he has got an Interest in Christ, until he has got some Assurance of the Love of God, and the Pardon of his Sins; it grieves him to the very Heart, to think that he should be so wild and foolish, as to waste so much of his precious Time, as he has done, in fleshly Lust, in abusing God's Mercy and Goodness, and grieving his Spirit; in that he has made a good and gracious God wait upon him so many Years, whilst he continued to run on in a Course of Rebellion against him. And therefore he now resolves, through the Grace of God assisting him, from this Time forward, to bid an everlasting Farewel to his beloved Sin, he now fully resolves to continue no longer in his sinful Course of Life; he is ready to cry out with *S Augustine*, *How long shall I say, To Morrow, To Morrow; why shall not this Day be the Day of my Conversion?* He therefore, without delay, sets about the Work of Conversion; he now begins to beg, labour, and strive to work out his Salvation.

Thus a Christian's Resolution is a present Resolution.

Thirdly, and Lastly, A Christian's Resolution is a settled and deliberate Resolution.

He doth not, as many do, take up a suddain and inconsiderate Resolution, to follow Christ: But he diligently considers;

I. What it might cost him to be a thorough Christian; the Death of his beloved Sin, that he knows

knows it must cost him, he knows he must part with every Sin; even with his most Flesh-pleasing Sin for Christ, or else he can't be no true Christian: But he considers, that it may cost him the Loss of his Credit and good Name, the Loss of Liberty, nay, the loss of his Life.

Now a penitent Sinner considers diligently of all these Things before he enters upon his Christian Course, lest after he has gone far with Christ, Persecution comes, and he Apostatize and falls away, and so his latter End be worse than his Beginning: *What Man, saith our Saviour, intending to build a Tower, sitteth not down first and counteth the Cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it, lest happily after he has laid the Foundation and is not able to finish it, all that behold him begin to mock him, Luke 14. 28, 29. So whosoever, saith he, forsaketh not all that he hath, cannot be my Disciple, Ver. 33.* Many have gone far with Christ; so far as their Interest lay with the Interest of Christ; but when the Interest of Christ, and their own Interest crost, then they have apostatized and fell away. But on the contrary, a wise Christian, before he enters upon a new Life, he first sets down and counts the Cost; he considers upon *Peter*, how sadly he fell when Christ had left him unto himself, notwithstanding his strong Resolution; saying, *If all should deny thee, yet will not I*; therefore he dares not purpose and resolve in his own Strength, for he knows himself to be very weak, and cannot move one step towards Heaven, without Divine Assistance; therefore he is Night and Day in earnest Prayer to God, for Strength from Heaven; and so in the Strength of Christ he is resolved to

take

take him for better and for worse, he is resolved to run all Hazards with him, he is resolved to venture all for him, to venture the Loss of a good Name, the Loss of Liberty, and the Loss of Life it self; as he expects to reign with Christ, so he resolves to choose him with all his Offices, as a Prophet to instruct him, as a King to reign over him, and rule in him, as a Saviour to save him from Sin, as well as from Punishment; he is resolved to off with his Right-hand Sins, and out with his Right-eye Sins; he is resolved to spare no Sin but to strive against it, watch against it, and fight against it with all his Might: He is resolved to take Christ as he is offered upon Self-denying Terms; he is resolved to give up himself Body and Soul to Christ, to walk with him, to suffer with him, and to die with him, if he be called thereunto; he is resolved to forsake all for him that stands in Competition with him, and so to live by Faith, and rest fully and wholly upon his Word and Promise for Eternal Salvation; he is resolved to follow Christ through all Difficulties and Dangers, through Sufferings and Persecutions, through Life and Death, until he comes to reign with Christ in Glory.

Thus have I done with the first Thing considerable, What the Resolution of a Christian is; I must be very brief in what follows:

II The Reason of the Necessity of this Resolution. Now for a Christian to make a settled and firm Resolution is very necessary:

I. Because, that until a Man sets a firm and full Resolution to turn to God, he is in a ready way to fall by every Temptation; he is apt to put off and delay his Repentance from time to time; he

is still liable to give himself more and more Liberty to all kind of Wickedness, to let the Bridle loose to his Lust; nay, until a Man comes unto a full and settled Resolution, he lies in the ready Road to open Prophaneness, and to the neglect of God and Holy Duties: and when he performs Duties, it is with such Coldness and Formality, as if he cared not whether he performed them or no. But when a Man comes to a resolved Point, when the whole Frame and Bent of his Heart is set toward Christ and Holiness, then there will appear earnest Endeavours after the Thing resolved upon: When once a Sinner comes to be resolved, then he delays no longer, but immediately sets about the Work of Conversion; then he is upon his Watch, and puts on the whole Armour of God, and strives, and fights against Sin and spiritual Wickedness. This was the Resolution of Job, Job 31. 1. *I made a Covenant with mine eyes, why then should I think upon a Maid?* As if he had said, *I have resolved and made a Covenant with my self, as much as in me lies, to avoid all Temptation to Sin; why then should I run my self into Temptation?* This also was the Resolution of David, Psalm 39. 1. *I said I will take heed to my Ways, that I Sin not with my Tongue, I will keep my Mouth with a Bridle.* And this is the Resolution of every true Christian, a settled, firm and sincere Resolution is a great Enemy to Sin and Satan.

2. This settled and firm Resolution is necessary to Repentance, because it is the first Step to Repentance. A Man may do many things in order to a Work of Conversion, yet if he have not a settled and firm Resolution to turn to God, he were

as good do nothing. But when once a Man comes to set up a settled, firm, sincere and hearty Resolution, to cleave fully and wholly to the Lord, and to resign up all the Faculties of his Soul to him, then the Work is more than half done. All the other Duties of Christianity will seem Easie and Pleasant. *David*, he resolved and iwore, and therefore he would perform: *I have sworn, faith he, and therefore will perform, that I will keep thy Statutes*, Psalm 119. 106.

Thus much for the Doctrinal Part; I shall be very short in the Application.

There is but one Use that I shall make of this Point, and that shall be a Use of Exhortation: Is it so, that whatever the People of *Israel* did, *Joshua* was resolved that he and his House will serve the Lord? Why, beloved Friends, let me exhort you, nay, let me intreat you all to enter upon a full, firm, present, settled and deliberate Resolution, that you and your Families will serve the Lord.

In the first Place, make a firm Resolution, to give up your own selves to the Lord, and his Service; let the Men of this World do what they please; if they will not be reform'd let them take their Course; if they are so in love with Hell and Damnation, so that they will run headlong thither, let them take their Course.

But, my dear Friends, into whose hands this little Book shall come, do you sincerely resolve to give up your selves to the Lord, and his Service; if others will be for Hell, do you resolve to be for Heaven; whatever it cost you, resolve to cleave close to the Lord in Opposition to the Malice of the Devil, the Inticements of the Flesh, and the

Temptations of this wicked World. If wicked Men should intice and seek to draw you into Sin with them, do not yield, but rather answer them as *Joseph* did his Mistress, *How can I do this great Wickedness, and Sin against God?* Gen 39. 9. If at any Time any of your old sinful Companions do intice, perswade, and intreat you to go with them to Drinking, Gaming, or any other vile Exercise, resolve with your selves, never to yield to none of their perswading Arguments; labour to obey the Counsel of *Solomon*, *My Son, if Sinners intice thee, consent thou not.*

Friends, Be exhorted now to make a firm and strong Resolution against all Difficulties, and Dangers, and Oppositions, dedicate your selves, Soul and Body, to the Lord; let others chuse what they will, do you chuse the Lord for your Portion, in all his Personal Relations, and in all his Essential Perfections, resolve to take him as a holy God, as a Sin-hating God, *and labour to be Holy, even as he is Holy*, 1 Pet. 1. 16. And resolve to chuse the Laws of Christ, as your Rule and Pattern; *I have, saith David, stuck to thy Testimonies, I have inclined my Heart unto thy Statutes always, even to the end*, Psalm 119. 31. Resolve to take Christ in all his Offices, in all his Inconveniences, resolve to run all Hazards with him; be exhorted now without delay, to bid an everlasting Farewel to all your Sins; and from henceforth make a firm Covenant with thy Body and Soul to be his, saying, *Lord, I do here lament, and am heartily grieved, that I have spent so much of my Time in Rebellion against thee; and in chusing the Ways of Sin: but I do here, from this Time forward, firmly resolve to bid an utter Defiance to all Sin, and, through thy*
Grace

Grace enabling me, now covenant with thee to be thine, and to forsake all that is near and dear unto me in this World for thy sake; I am resolved never more to yield my self a Servant to Sin and Satan; but to watch against all Temptation, whether of Prosperity or Adversity, but I do resolve to take thee for my Portion and Happiness, promising and vowing to serve thee in Holiness and Righteousness all the Days of my Life; and I do here fully resolve to chuse Jesus Christ as the Way to the Father, and to take my Lot with him, and to run all Hazards with him, resting upon him alone, in his Way for Salvation.

Secondly, Resolve not only to give up your selves to the Lord, but resolve to use your utmost Endeavours, that all under your Charge may likewise serve the Lord; as *Joshua* here did, not only resolve to serve the Lord himself, but he resolved both he and his House should serve the Lord.

So, my Friends, you that are Housholders and Governours of Families, let me exhort you to labour to set up the Worship of God in your Families; though you cannot inspire Grace into your Children and Servants, yet you may labour to convince them of their Sin and Misery by Nature, you may reprove them, and instruct and teach them in the Principles of Religion, and join with them in Prayer and holy Exercises. Oh! it is dreadful to consider, that there should be so many Thousand Families in the World, that are ungodly and prophane Families; many Governours of Families can take Care, that their Servants rise early in the Morning, and go about their Work, they can take Care that they be diligent about their Business, but they take no Care about the Concern of their Souls; they can take notice how

they do their Work, and are ready to be outrageous with them for every Fault, but yet can hear them Curse and Swear, and see them prophane the Lord's Day, and see them live loose and prophane Lives, and live in open Rebellion against the Lord, and yet take little or no notice of all this; they scarce ever call upon their Servants to Read, nor Read themselves unto them, nor yet do they pray with them, except it be now and then upon a Lord's Day.

For my part, I have been in many Families, but I never met but with here and there one, where the Worship of God and Religious Exercises hath been set up among them; I may speak it with Shame enough; for they never regard what becomes of their poor immortal Souls.

Truly, Friends, I am apt to think, that there being such a Multitude of Prophane, Irreligious Families among us in *England*, that it is a Fore-runner of some sad Judgment approaching; for, if the Scripture be the true Word of God, so indeed we must expect some sad Calamity to befall us ere long, if there be not a speedy Reformation in Houses and Families: See what a Threatning there lies in the Word of God against such, *Jer. 10. 25. That the Lord will pour out his Fury upon the Heathen that know him not, and upon the Nations that call not upon his Name.* The Heathen here is meant, all Ungodly, Irreligious Families. Let us, the People of this Land, have a care, that this Sentence be not pronounced against us; many of late have complained of the Badness of the Times, that Trading is dead, Money is scarce, and every Thing is dear.

But, Friends, let there but be a Thought of
Re-

Reformation in Houses and Families, and then you will as soon see as peaceable and happy Times, as ever was known since *England* has been inhabited. But if People will still remain to be Irreligious and Prophane in their Families, I am afraid that some sadder Judgment will befall us than ever yet we have seen: How can we expect Deliverance from our Enemies, and happy Times, whilst the Worship of God is so much neglected, and Families Duties never regarded?

To conclude: You that are Parents, Masters and Householders, if ever you desire your own Good, and a Blessing upon your Families, and Undertakings, and the Good of this Nation, be intreated now to suffer the Word of Exhortation; be exhorted now, no longer to neglect the Worship and Service of God in your Families: but as often as you see your Servants and Children sin against God, reprove them; where you see them Ignorant, instruct them.

Let me counsel you, to do this at convenient Opportunities, to Catechise your Children and Servants, at least once every Week, and instruct them in the Principles of Religion: every Lord's Day, in the Morning, call them up earlier than you do on other Days; and as soon as they have done their necessary Business, before you go with them to the Publick Worship of God, read to them some part of God's Word, and then give them some Private Instruction concerning what they have read; and call upon them to read some of God's Word, and then join with them in Prayer; and after Publick Worship, call every one of them to an Account, concerning the Sermon they heard, and stir up their Memories with it, and

edifie them as much as you can with these good Instructions, which the Preacher has delivered out of the Word of God, and then instruct them in the Principles of Religion; and conclude the Evening of the Lord's Day, in Reading and Godly Conferences, singing of Psalms and Praying. And every Morning in the Week call your Children and Servants together, and pray with them, before they and you go about the Works of your Calling: And let Godly Conference and Prayer, be every Evening's Exercise, before you go to Rest; and make a firm and strong Resolution, as *Joshua* did here, That, let others serve whom they will, you'll serve the Lord God of Israel, saying, *As for me and my House, we will serve the Lord.*

The End of the Fifth SERMON.

A PRAYER for a FAMILY.

O Most gracious, most glorious, and ever-blessed Lord God, who art perfect in Holiness, and infinite in all thy Perfections, look down from Heaven we beseech thee, with an Eye of Pity and Compassion upon thine unworthy Servants, sinful Dust and Ashes; who desires at this time, with all Reverence and Humility, to address our selves unto thee, to offer up unto thee our Petitions and Requests in thy Son's Name: But, Lord, we do humbly acknowledge and confess, that our Transgressions are so many, and so grievous, that we are ashamed to lift up our Eyes to Heaven, or to take thy holy Name into our polluted Lips: For, Lord, we confess, that we are conceived and born in Sin, we brought

Things are passed away: And God shall wipe away all Tears from your Eyes, Rev. 21. 4. There shall be Life without Death, Health without Sickneſs, and Pleaſure without Pain; as you ſhall be free from all Evil, ſo you ſhall enjoy all the Good that can be enjoyed. You ſhall there meet all your dear Friends and Relations, that departed in the Fear of God; there you ſhall rejoice one with another, and with one Heart and Voice ſing Praises and Hallelujahs to God, to the Lamb, that ſits upon the Throne for ever and ever.

And now, I hope, you are ready to ask, *What ſhall we do, that we may eſcape Everlaſting Torments, and get ſafe to Heaven?* and begin to be prick'd at the Heart, and are ready to ſay, *What ſhall we do to be ſaved.*

Anſw. If it be ſo, that you earneſtly deſire to know the Way to Heaven, and are willing to walk in that Way, then, as I, in my little Book for Young Ones, gave *Nine Directions*, what they ſhould do to eſcape Hell and attain Heaven; ſo here I will give you ſome Directions, *What you ſhall do to be ſaved*; and, inſtead of many, I will only give you theſe two; that is, (*Repent, and believe the Goſpel,*) follow but theſe two Directions, and you are in the right Way to Heaven: The Law indeed, requires *Perſect Obedience*; but no meer Man, ſince the Fall, is able perfectly to keep the Commandments of God, and ſo, by the Works of the Law, can never be ſaved.

God has, by Chriſt our Redeemer, required *Faith and Repentance*, as the Conditions of the Goſpel, by which Eternal Life is to be had. *Faith and Repentance* is all that God requires, in order to our Salvation: *Repent, and believe the Goſpel,*
and

and you shall certainly be saved. I will give you as plain Directions as possible I can, how you shall attain these Two Graces.

First for Repentance: You must know that there are Two kinds of Repentance; there is a false Repentance, and a true Repentance:

A false Repentance, is that which a Man is driven to, thro' fear of Hell and Damnation: When a wicked Man lies upon his Death-Bed then he seems to be sorry for his Sins past, and makes many fair Promises of a new Life; if it should please God to restore him to his former Health, he follows his old Course again. Now this kind of Repentance can never be effectual to Salvation.

II. Now you must mind what True Repentance is:

True Repentance is a saving Grace, whereby a Sinner, out of a true sense of his Sin, and apprehension of the Mercy of God in Christ, doth with grief and hatred of his Sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavour after new Obedience.

But now, seeing without this Repentance, there is no getting to Heaven, and that we cannot repent of our selves, it is of God's free Gift; I will therefore give you some plain Directions how Repentance may be had, and how to go through with it; for tho' we cannot repent of our selves, yet if we do not repent, the fault lies upon us.

1. The first Step to true Repentance, is the Examination of your selves; try your Hearts, and search into your former Lives, how, and after what manner you have spent your Time since you have been a Child; and to this End, I counsel you to make a Catalogue of all your Sins you can pos-

sibly

sibly call to Mind; for which purpose you must take the Ten Commandments for your Pattern.

Had I Time and Room, I would for your Memory, write you a Catalogue of Sins, which is against each of the Ten Commandments; but they being so many, that I cannot do it in so small a Book as this: But I counsel you to get you a Book wherein is the *Exposition on the Ten Commandments*; which shews what are those Sins of Omission, and Commission, which is against every Command, and try your self by these, and labour to find out as many of those Sins, as you know your self to be guilty of; for you will find many Sins there, that you in your place cannot commit; you may only take but one Commandment, or two, at a time, according as your Memory will hold; and if your Memory cannot contain all the Sins that you find your self guilty of, you may write them down, according as you find them out; which Way I think to be the best: And then every Evening, you may make use of this Catalogue, for the finding out the Sins that you committed in the Day; likewise, every Sabbath, the Sins you committed in the Week; likewise, before you receive the Sacrament, that thereby you may repent and be humbled for them.

2 The second Step to true Repentance, is the Confession of those Sins you have thus found out; you must spread them all before the Lord, and confess them all in particular, with all Circumstances, as, the Time when, Place where, and Manner how, such and such Things were committed. Now many confess in general, that they are Sinners; but few confess their Sins: And if your Sins are so innumerable, that you cannot find out every

and you shall certainly be saved. I will give you as plain Directions as possible I can, how you shall attain these Two Graces.

First for Repentance: You must know that there are Two kinds of Repentance; there is a false Repentance, and a true Repentance:

A false Repentance, is that which a Man is driven to, thro' fear of Hell and Damnation: When a wicked Man lies upon his Death-Bed then he seems to be sorry for his Sins past, and makes many fair Promises of a new Life; if it should please God to restore him to his former Health, he follows his old Course again. Now this kind of Repentance can never be effectual to Salvation.

II. Now you must mind what True Repentance is:

True Repentance is a saving Grace, whereby a Sinner, out of a true sense of his Sin, and apprehension of the Mercy of God in Christ, doth with grief and hatred of his Sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavour after new Obedience.

But now, seeing without this Repentance, there is no getting to Heaven, and that we cannot repent of our selves, it is of God's free Gift; I will therefore give you some plain Directions how Repentance may be had, and how to go through with it; for tho' we cannot repent of our selves, yet if we do not repent, the fault lies upon us.

1. The first Step to true Repentance, is the Examination of your selves; try your Hearts, and search into your former Lives, how, and after what manner you have spent your Time since you have been a Child; and to this End, I counsel you to make a Catalogue of all your Sins you can pos-

sibly

sibly call to Mind ; for which purpose you must take the Ten Commandments for your Pattern.

Had I Time and Room, I would for your Memory, write you a Catalogue of Sins, which is against each of the Ten Commandments ; but they being so many, that I cannot do it in so small a Book as this : But I counsel you to get you a Book wherein is the *Exposition on the Ten Commandments* ; which shews what are those Sins of Omission, and Commission, which is against every Command, and try your self by these, and labour to find out as many of those Sins, as you know your self to be guilty of ; for you will find many Sins there, that you in your place cannot commit ; you may only take but one Commandment, or two, at a time, according as your Memory will hold ; and if your Memory cannot contain all the Sins that you find your self guilty of, you may write them down, according as you find them out ; which Way I think to be the best : And then every Evening, you may make use of this Catalogue, for the finding out the Sins that you committed in the Day ; likewise, every Sabbath, the Sins you committed in the Week ; likewise, before you receive the Sacrament, that thereby you may repent and be humbled for them.

2. The second Step to true Repentance, is the Confession of those Sins you have thus found out ; you must spread them all before the Lord, and confess them all in particular, with all Circumstances, as, the Time when, Place where, and Manner how, such and such Things were committed. Now many confess in general, that they are Sinners ; but few confess their Sins : And if your Sins are so innumerable, that you cannot find out every

every particular Sin, so as to confess them all in particular; then confess the rest in general: And there is no doubt, but God will take this for a true and sincere Confession, in that there is no known Sin that you would willingly hide from God.

3. Another Step to true Repentance, is godly Sorrow for those Sins thus confessed: And it is godly Sorrow that works Repentance unto Salvation never to be repented of. Now for the obtaining of this godly Sorrow, you must use these Means:

1. Lay to Heart, how good, and how merciful God hath been to you; how many Tokens of his Love and Kindness, he hath bestowed upon you; and yet how ill you have requited him. Seriously consider how he hath delivered you from such and such a Sickness, when you were near Death: How he hath preserved you from such and such a Danger: How he hath delivered you from such and such Enemies: That notwithstanding your many Provocations, yet he hath born with you all this while: He hath Patience with you, and waits for your Repentance, who might in Justice have snatch'd you away whilst you were sinning, and sent you quick to Everlasting Burnings: Yet still he spares you; yet he gives you every Day fresh supplies of his Mercy: And, as before you were to make a Catalogue of your Sins, so here make a Catalogue of God's Mercies, those several kinds of Mercies and Favours you have received from him; and then lay to Heart what a base and unthankful Wretch you have been, thus to provoke and grieve so good and merciful a God. Think thus with your self, *O that I should be such a base, vile Wretch, for to*

provoke and grieve so loving a Father, that has been so good and gracious unto me! So merciful a Saviour that died for me.

Such Considerations deeply laid to Heart, will prick your Heart into Godly Sorrow for your Sins; as Peter, when he consider'd how he denied Christ, *He went out and wept bitterly*, Mat. 26. 75.

2. Keep in mind the most of those Sins whereby you have most dishonoured God, and grieved his Spirit: This also will be a Means to work in you Godly Sorrow.

3. Ply the Throne of Grace, by earnest and constant Prayer, that God might take away that *stony Heart of your Flesh*, and give you a *Heart of Flesh*, as he hath promised, *Ezek. 36. 26*. But it may be, God will seem not to hear your Prayers presently, if therefore you cannot find your Heart to relent the first time, go and pray again and again, and give God no rest untill he hear you; and then of a certain one time or other, God will melt your Heart into Godly Sorrow and Remorse for your former Sins; and then this excellent Grace of Repentance is begun and wrought in you.

4. The next thing to be done, is this, *Beg heartily to God for the pardon of your former Sins, that they may be cast all behind his Back, that they may be washed away in the Blood of Christ*.

And then, Lastly, make a firm, strong and settled Resolution (henceforth to lead a New Life;) this must not be a weak Resolution, but it must be a settled and deliberate Resolution. Now, when a Man seriously considers, that except he becomes a New Creature he cannot be saved; and thereupon takes up a strong and fix'd Resolution, henceforth

forth to lead a new Life, the Work is more than half done; that Man is not far from the Kingdom of Heaven. Thus for the Act of Repentance: Now I will give you some Helps for the daily renewing of your Repentance.

1. Every Morning as soon as you rise, prostrate your selves before the Throne of Grace, and earnestly beg for God's Assisting Grace, to keep you from falling into any kind of Sin that Day: For after a Man is Regenerated, he is yet daily liable to fall foul into Sin, without the Assistance of God's special Grace. Therefore earnestly desire of God in Prayer, that he might strengthen you against all Temptations of the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, and keep you that Day from falling into any kind of Sin.

2. When you have thus done, then go about the Works of your Calling: But set a strict and continual Watch over your Heart, and all your Senses: Watch your Eyes that they do not wander after Vanity; watch your Tongue, that no Lies, nor vain Jestings, nor unprofitable, filthy and corrupt Speeches, don't come from that: But, above all, watch your Heart, that no evil Thoughts do enter in there; for the Heart is the Spring and Fountain of all Sin and Wickedness: And be jealous over your selves in every thing you do, lest at any time you should sin in it, and keep your selves from all the Occasions of Sin; meddle with none of the Devil's Baits, lest you tempt God to leave you to be overcome. And as often as the Devil doth tempt you to any kind of Sin, or doth offer you any Bait, then immediately lift up your Heart to God by Ejaculatory Prayers; as thus, *Lord vanquish Satan at this time, that*

he don't overcome me : Lord. preserve me this once from falling into Sin : Lord, have Mercy on my Soul, and keep and strengthen me against this Temptation of the Devil, that I be not overcome. And if wicked Men should, at any time, seek to draw you into Sin with them, then make a firm Resolution with your self, never to consent, and as much as possibly you can, keep your self from the Company of Wicked Men : But when at any time, you, through infirmity, fall into Sin, then lie not in it, but immediately go by your self, into some Corner, and there present your self, and humbly confess it to God, and earnestly beg that God would cast it behind his Back, and wash it away in his Son's Blood, that it may never rise up against you to shame or condemn you : and give your self no rest, until God hath given you some assurance of Pardon ; and withal, renew your Resolution, to be more watchful for the Time to come. Thus renew your Repentance, as oft as you fall into sin ; or if you cannot do it presently, as soon as you sin, to be sure to do it before you lie down to sleep at Night ; every Night, before you lie down in your Bed, look back into the Day past ; what sins you have fallen into, and repent, and beg pardon for them, and look also and see what Temptations you have overcome, and what Graces God hath strengthened in you, and rejoyce and praise God for it. Thus, by continual Watching, and Praying, and Striving, you will find Sin to die in you more and more, and Grace more and more to grow and encrease in you ; and, whilst others grow near Hell, you will grow nearer and nearer to Heaven. This is the first step in the Way to Heaven, *Repentance.*

The

The second is Faith : As first I directed you to Repent, so secondly, Believe the Gospel.

Now Faith is a saving Grace, whereby we receive and rest upon Christ alone for Salvation, as he is freely offered to us in the Gospel. Now, seeing a true saving Faith is not in your Power, but it is the Gift of God, and God always bestows it upon those that use the Means which he hath prescribed in his Word, for the obtaining it; I shall therefore give you some Directions, what you shall do to have this Grace of Faith wrought in you :

1. Be diligent in reading the Scriptures : First, you must every Morning and Evening, read a Chapter in your Bible, or else some part of a Godly Sermon; and when you read, you must not run it over, and then leave it, you had as good do nothing, as do so; but when you read, you must take especial heed, what you be reading of; and when you have done, look back a little upon what you have read, and see what Sins are condemned there, that you know your self Guilty of, and be humbled for them; what Duties are required there, and resolve to practise them; what Judgments God hath threatned against such and such Sins, and stand in awe of them; what Promises God hath there made, and what are the Conditions of those Promises, and resolve, through the Grace of God enabling you, to perform those Conditions, that those Promises may belong to you : And, in so doing, then you read with Profit indeed.

2. Be fervent and diligent in hearing the Word Preached : *For Faith cometh by Hearing, and Hearing by the Word of God, Rom. 10. 17.* But then you

you must not do, as most do, who either sleep all the Sermon-time, or else lend their Ears for a while, and then when Sermon is ended, they let the Devil steal it out of their Hearts, and so never mind it afterwards; But you had better never go to Church at all, than to go and hear after that rate. But when you be at Church, you must hearken with all the Attention you can; hearken earnestly, as if you were to die presently, and go to Judgment. And for your Help herein, you must mark what is the Doctrine; what are the Reasons and Uses, and how many they are.

2. Hear with Affection: and for your Help you must hear, as if God himself were a speaking to you, and as if he spoke directly to you; you must hear, as if it were indeed the Word of God, and not of Man.

3. Whilst you are a hearing, set a Resolution to practise what you hear; and when you come home call over the Heads of the Sermon in your Mind, and turn every Use and Direction that has been delivered, into Prayer; pray for God's Blessing on it, and make it matter of your Meditation all the Week; and then lastly, set to the Practice of it.

4. Another Means for the getting of a saving Faith, is earnest Prayer unto God for it, Matth.

7. *Ask and you shall have, seek and you shall find, knock, and it shall be opened unto you.* But you will say, It may be, God will not accept my Prayers; for God heareth not Sinners, and the Prayers of the Wicked are an Abomination unto him. I answer; it is wilful Sinners that God will not hear; they that pray for

Mercy, and other good Things, and yet hate to be reformed; the Prayers of such, God will not regard: But they that come to God in a returning Way, with a full Purpose to leave their Sins, and pray, and earnestly desire Grace, especially this Grace of Faith, they shall certainly be accepted, and have their Prayers granted: But if you desire indeed to have this Grace of Faith bestowed on you, then you must look to the manner of your Prayers; you must not pray as most do; but you must pour out your very Soul in Prayer to God, your Heart and Tongue must go together, earnestly desiring that which you pray for; you must pray with Zeal and Fervency; you must strive and wrestle with God in Prayer, and never give him rest, until he hath granted your desire: These are the Prayers that God takes delight in; and if God answer not your Prayers the first nor second time, then try again and again, as the Woman of *Canaan* did; and then you need not doubt, but God will hear you at last.

Now concerning the Act of Faith, take but this Direction: Make a Catalogue of all the Promises, as you did before of your Sins, and God's Mercies; and then heartily believe, and assure your selves, that every one of those Promises belong to all those that perform the Conditions of those Promises: And if you perform the Conditions, then those Promises belong to you. As for Instance, I will Name this one particular Promise *Mat. 16. 29. Every one that hath forsaken House, or Brethren, or Sister, or Father, or Mother, or Wife, or Children, or Lands, for my Name's sake, shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting Life.* Now to make use of this Promise, wh

you thus embrace Christ, as he is offer'd, when you make your greatest Care to obey the Commands of Christ, all his Commands out of Love to him, as our Saviour; when you are heartily willing to forsake all your beloved Pleasures, your darling Lust, your secret Sin, for Christ's sake; and if at last you should be call'd to it, can willingly forsake Houses and Lands; yea, and your own Life too, for him, resting fully and wholly upon him for Salvation; then you are True Believers: And such a Faith as this, will certainly bring you to Heaven. Thus if you walk according to this Rule, that I have here set you, if you do thus repent, and believe the Gospel, then at last, when Unbelievers and all impenitent Sinners, shall be turned into Hell, you shall be received into the Joys of our Lord and Master, there to reign with him for ever and ever.

*Which God of his Infinite Mercy grant unto us all.
Amen.*

The End of the Sixth SERMON.

THE
 Future State of MAN :
 OR, A
 TREATISE
 OF THE
 Resurrection.

In a Funeral Sermon.

John XXVIII. xxix.

Marvel not at this, the Hour is coming, wherein all that are in the Graves shall hear his Voice, and shall come forth, they that have done Good, unto the Resurrection of Life, and they that have done Evil, unto the Resurrection of Damnation.

OUR Blessed Saviour, in these Words, sets forth unto us the State and Condition of all Men, at the last Day ; for though Sin hath brought Death into the World, and nothing is more certain than Death, so nothing is more certain than that our Bodies must, one Day, be raised

raised again from the Dust of the Earth; all other Creatures, which move upon the Earth, whensoever they die, there is an end of them, they shall never come into being more: But with Man it is otherwise, God has endowed Man with an immortal Soul, that shall never die; a Beginning, indeed, Man has, but he shall never have End: when Death comes, his Soul shall, for some certain space of time, be separated from this Body, and his Body laid a while to rest in the Dust of the Earth: *But the last Trumpet will sound, and then all that are in the Graves shall hear his Voice, and come forth; they that have done good, unto the Resurrection of Life, and they that have done evil, unto the Resurrection of Damnation.*

The Doctrine which I shall raise from hence, is this: That all Mankind, both good and bad, shall at the Sound of the last Trumpet be raised again from the Dust of the Earth.

Now my Method shall be this:

1. To prove, that there shall be a Resurrection.
2. Of the Persons that shall be raised; that is, *all that are in the Graves.*
3. By what means the Dead shall be raised that is, *by the Sound of the last Trumpet they shall hear his Voice, and shall come forth.*
4. The different Estate and Condition of all Men at the Resurrection: *they that have done good shall arise to the Resurrection of Life, but they that have done evil to the Resurrection of Damnation.*
5. And Lastly, To convince us all, by way of Application, of the drawing on of this Time, and therefore that we must not marvel at it; *Marvel not at this, for the Hour is coming, &c.*

1. To prove that there shall be a Resurrection ; which I shall do (first) from the Scripture, which is the true and infallible Word of God, to instance in some few places, as *Isa. 26. 19.* also *1 Cor. 15.* where we have a large Description of the Resurrection : Also, *Acts 24. 15.* *And have hope towards God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a Resurrection both of the Just and Unjust.* Likewise, *Dan. 12. 2.* *Many that are asleep in the Dust shall awake, some to everlasting Life, and some to Shame and everlasting Contempt.* Also, *Hos. 3. 14.* God has there promised Redemption from Death, and to ransom them from the Power of the Grave.

Now, if we would believe the Scripture, we must believe the Resurrection of the Body, for the Word of God is true and faithful, and our Lord Jesus Christ hath said in his Gospel, *That Heaven and Earth shall pass away, before one jot or one Tittle of his Word should fall to the Ground,* *Matth. 5.* And, besides all this, those Scripture-Promises, which have been already fulfilled in all Ages of the World, may assure us of the Accomplishment of this one Promise, *That our Bodies shall be raised at the last Day, from the Dust of the Earth.* *And this is my Father's Will, saith Christ, that, of all that the Father hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last Day,* *John 6. 39.*

2. That there shall be a Resurrection of the Body, may be proved not only from Scripture, but also from Nature it self ; the Resurrection also is proved from Nature, as we may see from *Isa. 26. 19.* *Thy dead Men shall live, together with my dead Body shall they arise : awake and sing, ye*
that

that dwell in the Dust, for thy Dew is as the Dew of Herbs, and the Earth shall cast out our Dead. Thy Dew is as the Dew of Herbs ; which intimates to us thus much, That as the Herbs and Plants seem to lie dead and withered all the Winter, yet in the Spring they revive, and come forth fresh and green ; and as in the Night, the Sun is withdrawn, and the Day seems to be buried in the silent Night, yet in the Morning the Sun riseth as bright as ever, and enliveneth the World with his gloriou Beams : So it is here, though the Bodies of Men and Women seem for a time to be lost, and turned to Dust and Corruption, yet in the glorious Morning of the Resurrection, they shall be all raised to Life, and revive to an immortal Estate.

3. That there shall be a Resurrection of the Body, may be proved also by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ ; that as our Lord Jesus Christ suffered, died, and was buried, that by his Death he might redeem us from Sin and Hell ; so he arose again, that by the Vertue of his Resurrection he might redeem us again from Death and the Grave : The Apostle makes the Resurrection of Christ the Foundation of our Resurrection, as you may see, 1 Cor. 15. 12. *Now if Christ be preached that he arose from the Dead, how say some of you, that there is no Resurrection of the Dead.* Now there were some that did not believe, that there was any Resurrection of the Dead ; and this their Incredulity and Unbelief the Apostle confutes, and proves, that there shall be a Resurrection ; and that from the Doctrine of Christ's Resurrection, intimating, that if Christ be raised from the Dead, as he preached, that he is ri-

risen; then it must needs follow, that there must be a Resurrection of all Men from the Grave. Now these People that hold strong that Opinion, that there shall be no Resurrection of the Dead; yet these same Men did preach, that Christ was raised; but the Apostle tells them plain, *That if it be so as they say, that there is no Resurrection of the Dead, then Christ is not risen.* Ver. 13, *And if Christ be not risen, he tells them, what a sad Condition we are in; for all our Preaching, Praying, and all that we do and suffer for Christ is in vain,* Ver. 14. 5. But in Verse 20. the Apostle reconciles both Arguments together, *But now is Christ risen from the Dead, and become the first Fruits of them that slept:* So that here the Apostle assures them, that Christ is risen from the Dead, and by the Vertue and Power of his Resurrection, all Mankind shall one Day be raised from the Grave. And besides, we read in *Mat. 27.* That at the Resurrection of Christ, Graves opened, and many of the Bodies of the Saints which slept, arose out of their Grave; which is in an Earnest to us, that by the same Vertue and Power, all the Bodies of Men and Women, that are, and ever have been, and ever shall be to the World's End, shall be raised again at the last Day.

4. That there shall be a Resurrection of the Body, is an Article of our Faith; therefore, we cannot deny the Resurrection, except we remove our Belief, and deny our Christianity it self; this was an Article of the Apostles Faith, *Acts 24. 15.* *And have Hope towards God, which themselves also allow, that there shall be a Resurrection of the Dead, both of the Just and of the Unjust.*

5. And

5. *And Lastly*, There must of Necessity be a Resurrection of the Dead, for the full Manifestation of all God's Attributes: for the Attributes of God are daily manifest in his Providential Dispensation; yet there will not be a full Manifestation of all his glorious Attributes till the Resurrection: Now many of God's Attributes are clouded under some dark Providence, but at the Resurrection there shall be a full and glorious Manifestation of all God's Attributes.

1. The Glory of his Wisdom: The Wisdom of God is wonderfully declared, if we consider of it in those innumerable sorts of Creatures, which he hath made in such a holy and beautiful Order and Manner, and in his so wisely ordering and governing all Things and Creatures for his own Glory, and the Good of his People. But, oh! how wonderfully will the Wisdom of God be manifested by all the World at the Resurrection, when both the Earth, Fire, and Water, shall all cast forth their Dead, and not one Man, Woman nor Child, of all the Seed of Adam, shall be left; and every Part and Member of each Body shall be joined to the same Body, in which they belong, and every Soul shall enter into his own Body.

But it may be, some will object and say, *How can it be that all the Dead can be raised, for many are drowned in the Sea, and their Carcasses are eaten by Fishes, and living Men have eaten those, and those Men, it is like, afterward have been burnt to Ashes, and their Ashes mingled among the Dust on the Earth, and scattered up and down, none does know where?*

risen; then it must needs follow, that there must be a Resurrection of all Men from the Grave. Now these People that hold strong that Opinion, that there shall be no Resurrection of the Dead; yet these same Men did preach, that Christ was raised; but the Apostle tells them plain, *That if it be so as they say, that there is no Resurrection of the Dead, then Christ is not risen.* Ver. 13, *And if Christ be not risen, he tells them, what a sad Condition we are in; for all our Preaching, Praying, and all that we do and suffer for Christ is in vain,* Ver. 14. 5. But in Verse 20. the Apostle reconciles both Arguments together, *But now is Christ risen from the Dead, and become the first Fruits of them that slept:* So that here the Apostle assures them, that Christ is risen from the Dead, and by the Vertue and Power of his Resurrection, all Mankind shall one Day be raised from the Grave. And besides, we read in *Mat. 27.* That at the Resurrection of Christ, Graves opened, and many of the Bodies of the Saints which slept, arose out of their Grave; which is in an Earnest to us, that by the same Vertue and Power, all the Bodies of Men and Women, that are, and ever have been, and ever shall be to the World's End, shall be raised again at the last Day.

4. That there shall be a Resurrection of the Body, is an Article of our Faith; therefore, we cannot deny the Resurrection, except we remove our Belief, and deny our Christianity it self; this was an Article of the Apostles Faith, *Acts 24. 15.* *And have Hope towards God, which themselves also allow, that there shall be a Resurrection of the Dead, both of the Just and of the Unjust.*

5. And

5. *And Lastly*, There must of Necessity be a Resurrection of the Dead, for the full Manifestation of all God's Attributes: for the Attributes of God are daily manifest in his Providential Dispensation; yet there will not be a full Manifestation of all his glorious Attributes till the Resurrection: Now many of God's Attributes are clouded under some dark Providence, but at the Resurrection there shall be a full and glorious Manifestation of all God's Attributes.

1. The Glory of his Wisdom: The Wisdom of God is wonderfully declared, if we consider of it in those innumerable sorts of Creatures, which he hath made in such a holy and beautiful Order and Manner, and in his so wisely ordering and governing all Things and Creatures for his own Glory, and the Good of his People. But, oh! how wonderfully will the Wisdom of God be manifested by all the World at the Resurrection, when both the Earth, Fire, and Water, shall all cast forth their Dead, and not one Man, Woman nor Child, of all the Seed of *Adam*, shall be left; and every Part and Member of each Body shall be joined to the same Body, in which they belong, and every Soul shall enter into his own Body.

But it may be, some will object and say, *How can it be that all the Dead can be raised, for many are drowned in the Sea, and their Carcasses are eaten by Fishes, and living Men have eaten those, and those Men, it is like, afterward have been burnt to Ashes, and their Ashes mingled among the Dust on the Earth, and scattered up and down, none does know where?*

To this I answer, That to Man, indeed, this is impossible to be; but if God be Infinite in his Wisdom and Power, as indeed he is, then he makes the Dust of every Man, Woman and Child; and by his all wise Providence knows what Dust belong to such and such a Body, where-ever it is scattered; He in his Wisdom also knows what Dust belongs to such and such a Member, and part of such and such a Body, where-ever it is scattered; he likewise knows how to join Bone to his Bone, and every part in his right place and order; O what wonderful displaying of Wisdom here will be!

2. Here will be a wonderful Manifestation of God's Power also; the Power of God is now wonderfully seen, in his making such a vast great Fabrick as this World is, and in his spreading the Heavens round the Earth, and his hanging the Earth in the midst upon nothing, here is a great Declaration of God's Power: But, Oh! how the Power of God will be manifest at last to the whole World; when he shall cause the Earth to shake, and the Mountains to tremble, and the Heavens to pass away with a great Noise, and to be rowled up like a Scroll; and the Graves shall open, and both Earth, Fire and Water shall give up their Dead, and all Mankind shall revive again.

Friends, here will then be a Declaration of infinite Power; for know this, he that by his Power made all Things out of Nothing, can as easily by the same Power raise our Bodies again out of something, even out of their own Substance or Matter.

Again,

Again, There must be a Resurrection of the Dead, for the full Manifestation of his Holiness, Mercy, Justice, and Truth; for Brevity, I will name them all together: Here in this World the Justice, Goodness, and Holiness of God is clouded under dark Dispensations; the Wicked we see they flourish, and live at Heart's ease, and eat of the Fat of the Earth, and are let alone to prosper in their ungodly Doings. But, on the other side, the dear Children of God they many times are chastened, afflicted, persecuted, trodden under Foot by the Wicked, and made the Off scowring of all Things. Now here the Mercy, Goodness, Justice, Promises, and Threatnings of God, all seem to be clouded; this was that which made *David* like to stumble, as he himself confesseth, Psalm 73. *That his Steps were almost gone, his Feet had well near slipt.* Therefore, upon this Account there must be a general Resurrection, where all things may be brought to rights, and all dark Providences unriddled; and that it may be made manifest to all the World, what a holy, just and righteous God the Lord is in his severe Punishment of rebellious Sinners; and yet how faithful and gracious he is towards penitent Sinners, in rewarding them according to his gracious Promises; and then both Saints and Reprobates shall confess *That the Lord is just and righteous in all his Ways and holy in all his Works.*

Thus I have sufficiently proved, that there will be a Resurrection of the Dead.

2. The Second Thing to be considered from the Text, is the Number of the Dead which shall be raised; that is All; for so saith our Lord and Saviour here in the Text, *The hour is coming*

wherein

wherein all that are in the Graves, shall hear his Voice, and shall come forth: All; that is, all the Sons and Daughters of *Adam*, that ever has lived since the World began, and all that ever shall Live and Die to the end thereof; all must arise and make their Appearance at the last Day, *S. John* declares in his Vision, *Rev. 20. 12. That he saw the Dead, both small and great, stand before God.* By small and great, we are to understand (not to understand in respect of Stature, as if some shall appear grown Men, and some Children) we must all appear then in the Stature and Fulness of Christ; that is of a middle Stature, or of that Stature *Adam* was created in, which is of a middle Stature; the oldest shall appear no older, and the youngest no younger, but by small and great we are there to understand,

First, Those that died of all Ages, from the oldest to the Child that is still born.

Secondly, By small and great we are to understand all States and Degrees of Men and Women, both high and low, rich and poor, noble and ignoble; all Sorts and Estates of Men must then make their Appearance, from the King on the Throne, to the Beggar on the Dunghil: And *Verse 13. S. John* did see in his Vision, *That the Sea gave up her Dead; and Death and Hell, that is the Earth and the Grave cast up their Dead, and all judged according to their Works.* All the Elements at the Call of Christ, must give up their Dead; all that the Fire had consumed and sent to Ashes; all that ever hath been lost in the Sea; and, all that ever hath been buried in the Earth, as soon as the last Trumpet sounds they

they must all come forth, none shall be so great as to escape, nor none shall be so small as to be forgotten. O what a great, what a vast Assembly will there be, when all the Sons and Daughters of *Adam* shall meet together : To see an Army of Men together, we think it a great Sight : If all the Men and Women in *England* were to meet together at one Place, what a great, what an invincible great Assembly would there seem to be : But alas ! what is *England* to the whole World ; it is counted but a Garden-plot to other Nations : And what is the whole World now living, in respect of all Ages that are past and to come ? All the *Israelites* of old, which was counted as the Sand of the Sea, they were so innumerable ; and besides them, so many Millions of Millions that have been slain in the Wars, and so many Thousands that has been swallowed up in Earthquakes, and so many Thousands and Millions of Millions that has died by the Pestilence, and all other mortal Distempers in all Ages of the World ; and all that have died naturally in Infancy, in Youth, Middle Age, and Old-Age, and all that are now living, and that shall live to the World's end. When all these shall meet together at the general Resurrection, O what a wonderful Meeting will here be ! *We must all appear before the Judgment-seat of Christ*, saith the Apostle, 2 Cor. 5. 10.

Friends, Both you that read this Treatise, and I that write, we must all make our Appearance there, for all that are in the Graves shall hear his Voice, and come forth.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, The Third Thing to be considered is this, by what Means all the Dead shall be raised; that is, by the Sound of the last Trumpet; for so saith our Saviour in the Text, All that are in the Graves shall hear his Voice and come forth; and what Voice this is, that the dead shall hear, you may see in 1 Cor. 15. 52. that is the Sound of the last Trumpet, For the Trumpet shall sound, and the Dead shall be raised; and who that is, which shall sound this Trumpet, you may see in 1 Thes. 4, 15, 16. For this I say unto you, by the Word of the Mouth of the Lord, that we which are alive shall not prevent them which are asleep, for the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a Shout, with the Voice of the Arch-angel, and with the Trump of God.

So that you see that this Trumpet shall be sounded by an Arch angel: So *Matth. 24. 31. They shall see the Son of Man coming in the Clouds of Heaven, with Power and great Glory, and he shall send his Angels with a great Sound of a Trumpet, and they shall gather together his Elect from the four Winds, from one end of Heaven to the other.*

Thus we see by what Means the Dead shall be raised; that is, by the Voice of the Arch-angel, by the Sound of the last Trumpet, which Voice shall be uttered more loud and shrill, than Thunder, uttering these Words; *Arise, ye Dead, and come to Judgment.* Now in a few Verses before the Text, *Ver. 25* we have another Voice that is sounding in our Ears, *The Hour is coming, and now is, that the Dead shall hear the Voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.* Now these two Verses, that of the Text, and *Ver. 25.*

tho'

tho' they seem to be alike in sound, yet they differ much; and that in these Two Respects:

1. First in respect of Time: That Voice spoken of in *Ver 25.* is uttered in the Present Tense, *The Hour is coming, and now is:* But that Voice spoken of in the Text, is spoke of altogether in the Future Tense, *The Hour is coming:* Mark, there is no *now is*, but *it is*, a Time that is coming.

2. There is a great Difference betwixt these Two Voices, and that in respect of the Sence and Meaning of the Words; for them in the first Voice, contains gracious and inviting Words, which are interpreted by Divines after this Manner: *Arise, ye Dead, and come to Judgment:* That is, those that are dead in their Sins, and rotting and stinking in the Grave of their Lust: Now these are under the Call of the Gospel, and they that hearken to this Call, and obey this Voice, and so come to Jesus Christ, by a true and lively Faith, and unfeigned Repentance, they shall, by Christ, obtain everlasting Life. But whether they will hear this Voice, or whether they will stop their Ears against it; yet let them know there is another Voice which shall be uttered to the World, which is a Voice of Power; and that Voice they must hear whether they will or no, *Arise, ye Dead, and come to Judgment.*

Consider, Friends, tho' you now stop your Ears, and will not hear the Sound of the Trumpet of the Gospel; yet know this, there is another Trumpet, which will one Day sound, calling all the Dead out of their Graves, saying, *Arise, ye Dead, and come to Judgment:* and whenever that last Trumpet sounds, you must hear it whether

you

you will or no; the Depth of the Grave shall not hinder the Sound, nor yet the Depth of the Sea shall not hinder it.

He that could at first command all Things out of Nothing, by the Word of his Power, so at the last Day he will but speak the Word, and the Dead shall all arise, and make their Appearance before the Tribunal Seat of Christ.

The Sound of this last Trumpet shall be so loud, that it shall be heard all over the World, it shall pierce even to the Bottom of the Sea, and to the Bowels of the Earth: No sooner is this Trumpet sounded, but the Sound shall be obeyed: No sooner is this Voice uttered, *Arise ye Dead, and come to Judgment*; but immediately, the Graves in all the Church Yards, and in all other Places throughout the whole World, shall be all opened, and the Body of every Man and Woman shall be framed out of his own Dust, and Bone shall be joined to Bone, and every Part and Member shall be joined in its Place and Order; and every Soul shall return into its own Body; the Sea shall give up her Dead; and the Fire and Earth shall give up their Dead; and then immediately they shall be all gathered together, even to the Valley of *Jehosaphat*, to be there presented before the Judgment seat of Christ; as you may see *Joel 3. 12.* For, says Christ here, *The Hour is coming, wherein all that are in the Graves shall hear his Voice, and come forth.*

Fourthly, The Fourth Thing considerable in the Text, is the different Estate and Condition of all Mankind at the Resurrection; that is, *Some shall arise to the Resurrection of Life, and some to the Resurrection of Damnation.* Now the different Estate of

of God
confide

1.

all M
Earth
the sa
first
Many
be a
of th
Saint
the C
venly
sand
the
are
is n
Year
of C
Yea
But
we
bet
the
pla
he
if
on
A
th
ar
th
af

R

of Good and Bad, at the Resurrection, may be considered in these Three Respects :

1. They differ in respect of Time: For tho' all Mankind shall be raised from the Dust of the Earth, yet they shall not be raised all at one and the same Time; there shall be Two Resurrections, first of the Saints, and then of the Wicked: Many there be, which affirm, That there shall be a Thousand Years betwixt the Resurrection of the Saints, and of the Wicked; that the Saints shall all arise at the Coming of Christ in the Clouds, with all his glorious Train of Heavenly Host, and shall Reign with him a Thousand Years upon the Earth; and, that the rest of the Dead arise not, until that Thousand Years are accomplished, *Rev. 20. 4. 5.* Some say, this is meant the compleat Number of a Thousand Years: And some say, the Meaning of the Spirit of God there, is not the Number of a Thousand Years, but only a considerable Space of Time: But I will not affirm any thing of that; yet this we are certain, that there shall be a Difference between the Resurrection of the Good, and of the Bad, in respect of Time: For Saint Paul is plain in this Case, as we may see, *1 Thess. 4. 16.* he saith, *That the Dead in Christ shall rise:* And if the Dead in Christ rise first, then the Resurrection of the Wicked must needs follow after: And *Acts 24. 15.* *There shall be a Resurrection both of the Just, and of the Unjust.* First of the Just, and then of the Unjust; but how long a Time there shall be between that, I will not positively affirm.

2. There shall also be a Difference between the Resurrection of the Good and of the Bad; and that

that in respect of their Image and Shape: *The Bodies of the Saints shall be raised in Glory, a Splendour like unto Christ's glorious Body, Phil. 3. 21.* saith the Apostle, *who shall change our vile Bodies, and fashion 'em like unto the glorious Body of Christ.* Thus Christ himself gives us a Description of the Brightness of the Saints Bodies at the Resurrection, *Matt. 13. 43. Then shall the Righteous shine as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father.* The Bodies of our first Parents, in their State of Innocency, was adorned with a glorious Beauty and Comeliness. Now this should have been the State and Condition of the Bodies of all their Posterity, if they had not sinn'd; but Sin hath stripp'd us of that glorious Beauty and Ornament, and, without artificial Cloathing, our Bodies are very loathsome, nay, monstrous vile to behold; but, in the glorious Morning of the Resurrection, those loathsome and vile Bodies of the Saints shall be *changed and fashioned like unto the glorious Body of Christ.* But, on the other side, the Bodies of the Wicked, shall, at the Resurrection, appear more monstrous, vile, and deformed, than they were before in their State of Nature: And, besides, the Bodies of the Saints shall be delivered from that Lumpishness and Heaviness that they be now clogged with, and, instead of Natural Bodies, they shall be made Spiritual Bodies, *1 Cor. 15. 44.* and shall fly to and fro as swift as Spirits; but as for the Wicked, they shall be bound Hand and Foot, and cast into utter Darkness, *there shall be Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth, Matth. 22. 23.*

Fifthly,

Fifthly, and Lastly, There shall also be a vast Difference betwixt the Resurrection of the Good, and of the Bad, in respect of their final State and Condition, that they shall be raised unto; *They that have done Good, unto the Resurrection of Life, and they that have done Evil, unto the Resurrection of Damnation:* The Good being first raised, and then the Wicked; and then, immediately after, the Resurrection both of the just and of the unjust: then they shall be divided one from another, *As a Shepherd divideth his Sheep from the Goats, Matt. 25. And he shall set the Sheep on his right hand, but the Goats on the left.* At first shall be pronounced the joyful Sentence upon the Righteous, *Come, ye blessed of my Father inherit the Kingdom:* But the Wicked shall be sent away with that doleful Sentence, *Depart from me, ye cursed, into Everlasting Fire, which was prepared for the Devil and his Angels.*

Sixthly, and Lastly, The Last Thing considerable in the Text, and that which I intend shall be the Application of the whole, is the drawing near of the Time, when the Resurrection shall be; and therefore our Blessed Saviour bids us not to marvel at it. There were some in our Saviour's Time, and also some in the Apostles Time, and some there are in our Days, that marvel, when they hear of the Resurrection of the Body, and of a General Judgment, they will not believe it: But oh! how strange soever they make of it, our Blessed Saviour assures them of it, and tells them that it will certainly be: Therefore this Doctrine may serve to convince us,

First,

First, Of the general Resurrection and Day of Judgment: for I have in this Discourse proved it by several Arguments, that there shall be a Resurrection, both of the Just and of the Unjust; and as there is nothing more certain than Death, so there is nothing more certain than a general Resurrection after Death.

Secondly, This may convince us, That as there shall be a general Resurrection, so the Time when the Resurrection shall be, is drawing near, so saith our Lord Christ himself here in the Text, *Marvel not at this, the Hour is coming, wherein all that are in the Grave shall hear his Voice and come forth*; tho' our Blessed Saviour tells us, *Mat. 24.* That neither Men, nor Angels knows when the time shall be, yet he assures us, that the time is a coming, *Acts 17. 31.* We see there that God hath appointed a Day, wherein he will Judge the World. And this appointed time is a drawing nearer and nearer; do we not see how Days and Nights wheel about apace, yea, so fast is the time of the general Resurrection coming on, so many times as the Sun has wheel'd round the World since the Creation, so many rounds is the Thread wound off, and still it keeps winding off, and it will not be long e'er it be all wound off; it is now near 1705 Years since our Lord Christ ascended up into Heaven; the Angels said unto the Men of *Nazareth*, That this same Jesus shall so come again, as you have seen him go into Heaven, *Acts 1.* And the time ever since has been drawing nearer and nearer; and the time now certainly cannot be long, but that our Lord Jesus Christ will come in the Clouds, and then the Trumpet will sound, and the Dead shall be raised, and both Quick and Dead must make their general Appearance.

First,

First, Here is a Use of Reproof to [such as take Liberty to run on in Sin, putting far from them the Evil Day. And because the Lord seemeth to delay his coming, therefore their Hearts are set in them to do Evil. There were some in the Apostles Days, and I fear there are many such in these our Days, that walk after their own Lust, and saying, *Where is the Promise of his Coming? For since the Fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the Creation,* 2 Pet. 3. 34. But the Apostle tells them, Ver. 89. That the Lord is not slack concerning his Promise, as some Men count Slackness, but is Long-suffering towards us, not willing that any should perish: but the Day of the Lord, whenever it comes, will come as a Thief in the Night, *Verse 10 And when Men shall say, Peace and Safety, then suddenly cometh Destruction upon them, as Travel upon a Woman with Child, and they shall not escape. My Friends, pray have a Care; for though you think as the Lord delayeth his coming, and thereupon you take Liberty to your selves to fulfil the Desire of the Flesh, yet take you heed lest the Lord come in a Day when you look not for him, and in an Hour when you are not aware of; and cut you asunder, and appoint your Portion among the Hypocrites, there shall be Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth,* Mat. 24. 50, 51.

2. A Use of Exhortation: If it be so, that the Lord Jesus Christ will certainly come, and shortly come, and we must all be presented before him, then how should we live here with all Care and Circumspection, that we may be found of him in Peace, Blameless and without Spot; *How should we labour to be Holy in all manner of Conversation, and*
God.

Godliness ; looking for, and hastning unto the coming of the Day of God? 2 Pet. 3. 11, 12. Let this be a strong Motive to move all Christians to Duty and Obedience, and to Perseverance therein ; let the Word of S. James be as a Spur to prick you up to be stedfast, and to hold out in the Work of the Lord, Jam. 5. 8. Be patient therefore, Brethren, establish your Hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. And let me exhort all in the Words of our Saviour, Mark 13. 33. Watch you therefore, for you know not when the Time is : And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch. And in the Words of the Apostle, Heb. 10. 25. Exhorting one another so much the more, as you see the Day approaching.

And farther to encourage us in Well-doing, and to be the more diligent, to rebuke, to exhort, to perswade, and encourage one another in Well-doing, let us consider, That we must all one Day, meet together, to be the Acquitters, or else the Condemners of one another ; tho' Death comes and takes away a Wife from a Husband, and a Husband from a Wife ; tho' it takes away Parents from their Children, and Children from their Parents ; tho' Death comes and makes a Breach among Relations, Neighbours, and Families, yet let us consider, that the Day of the Resurrection will come, and then we shall all meet together again, and then we shall not only see and know one another ; but we shall also be able to converse one with another : But, oh ! what a dreadful Meeting we shall then have, if we shall be forced to be the Condemners of one another at that Day ; the Apostle tells us, that the Saints shall Judge the World at the last Day ; Oh ! how dreadful will

The Future State of Man.

this be, when godly Parents shall be Condemners of their own Children, the Fruit of their own Bowels, those whom they once delighted in, and loved most dearly; now, to pronounce Christ's Sentence against them, because they were stubborn, and wilful, and would not hearken to their godly Counsels and Admonitions; I say, for godly Parents to exalt and applaud Christ's Sentence against them, when they are condemned to everlasting Fire: Oh! how dreadful will this be: And thus for Children to condemn their own Parents, because they let them alone in their evil Courses, and would not correct them, nor reprove them. And for Husbands and Wives to be the Condemnation of one another. Oh, how sad will this be! Nay, consider farther, that Relations, Families, Neighbours, and Acquaintance, which spend their precious Time together in Feasting, Drinking, Gaming, and other kind of loose Living, must meet together, and be the Condemners of one another at the last Day. Oh, what a dreadful Meeting will this be! But, on the other hand, consider, that all those Parents and Children, Husbands and Wives, Families, and Relations, which would not join with the Wicked, but spent their Time in Praying together, and for one another, in Exhorting, Instructing, Reproving, and Encouraging one another: Oh, what a joyful Meeting these shall have at the Resurrection! Now Death many times makes a sad Breach among Families and Relations; a Wife she laments for the Loss of her Husband; he laments for the loss of his Wife; the Children sometimes do grieve, because they have lost a loving Father, or a dear Mother; and the Parents they grieve, and are cast down, because

they have lost a precious Child. But, Friends Weep not for your Relations, as without Hope for they are not lost, for the Morning of the Resurrection will come, the Trumpet will sound, and the Dead shall arise, and then you shall meet them all again: And no Tongue can utter or express the Joy you shall have one with another to all Eternity, if you spend your Time together in this World in the Works of Faith and Obedience.

And now, to conclude, Let us all therefore so live, and so spend our short time here on Earth, that so in the glorious Morning of the Resurrection, when the last Trumpet shall sound, we may rise to the Resurrection of Life, and Triumph and Rejoyce among glorious Angels to all Eternity Which the Lord of his Mercy grant. *Amen.*

The End of the Seventh SERMON.

F I N I S.

ADVERTISEMENT.

There is lately Publish'd by the Author, Robert Ruffel, these Two Books, viz.

THE Devout Christian's Daily Companion and Exercise in Devotion: Containing Prayers for every Day in the Week, and several Occasions; for Families, and Private Persons alone; with Meditations, Thanksgivings, Graces Before and After Meat, Price Bound 1 s.

A Treatise of the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, with Perswasions and Encouragements to the Receiving thereof. To which is added, A Weeks Preparation before the Receiving the Blessed Sacrament, for the Help of Young Beginners. Price Bound 1 s.

All the Works of Robert Ruffel, in Three Parts, Bound together. Price Two Shillings Six Pence, Sold by J. Blare, at the Looking-Glass on London Bridge.

o
o
n
o
at
n
fe
d
t
Σ
er
et,
v.
er
ei-
ion
of
er
old